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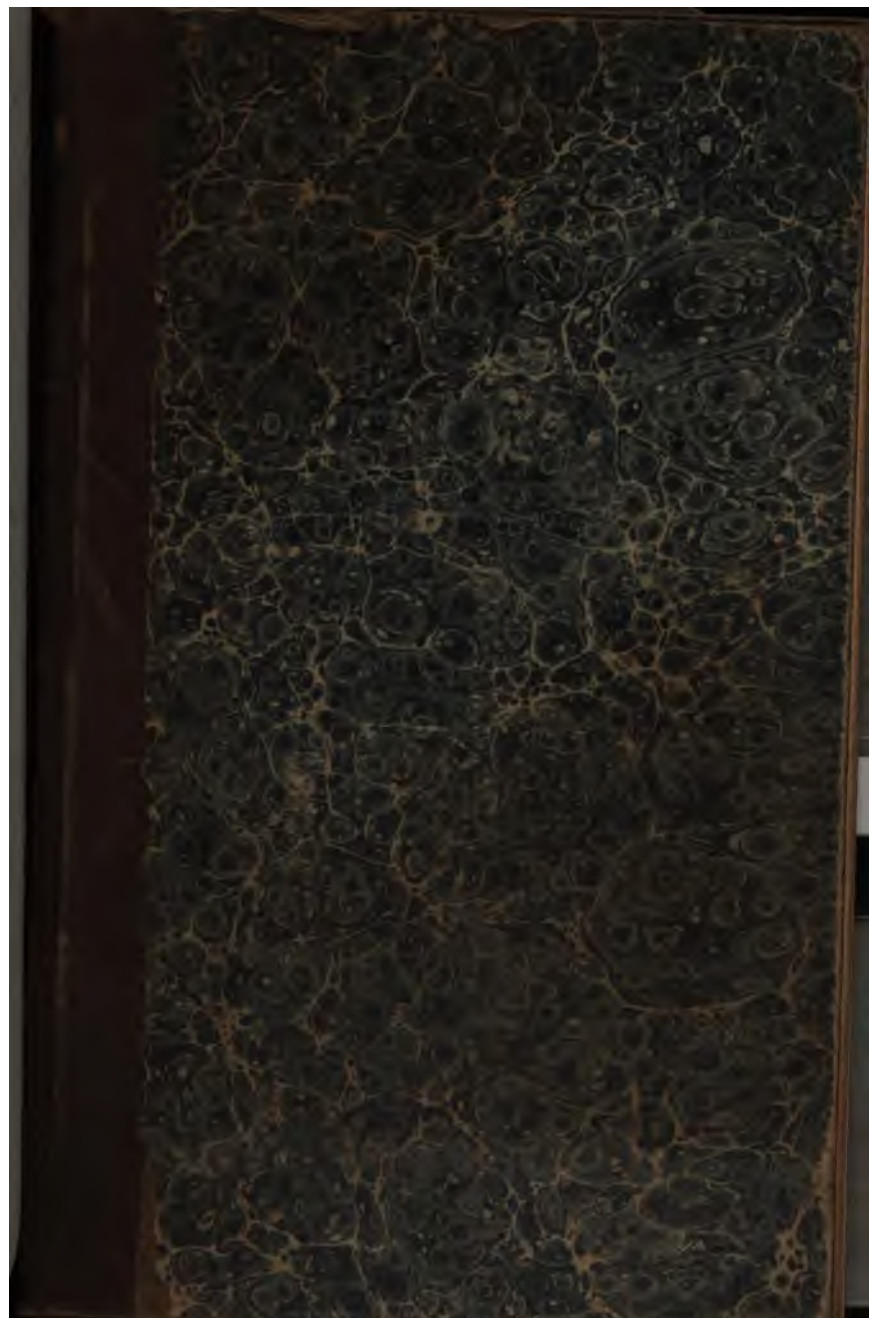
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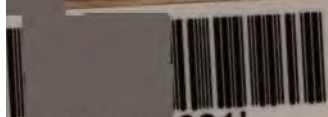
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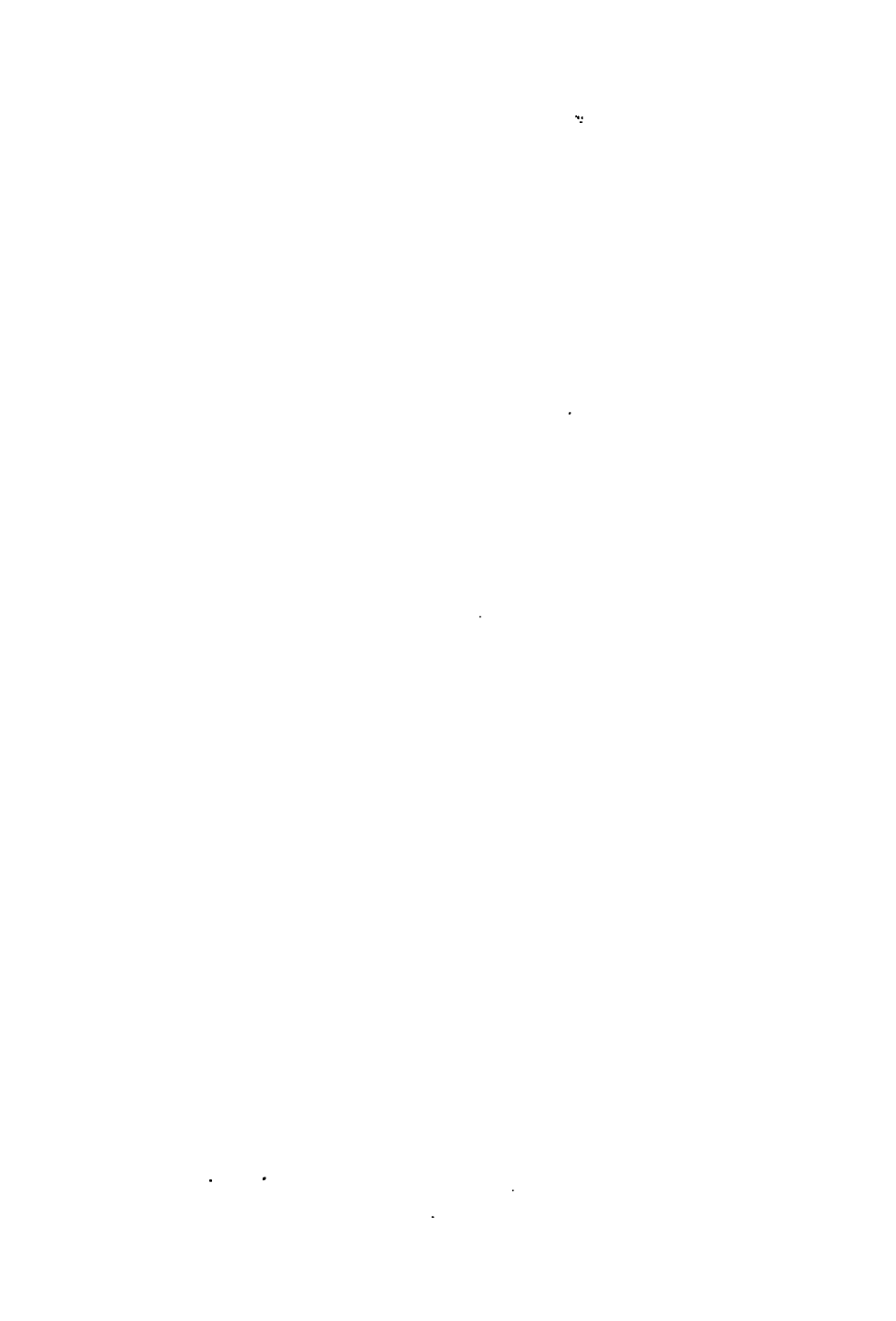


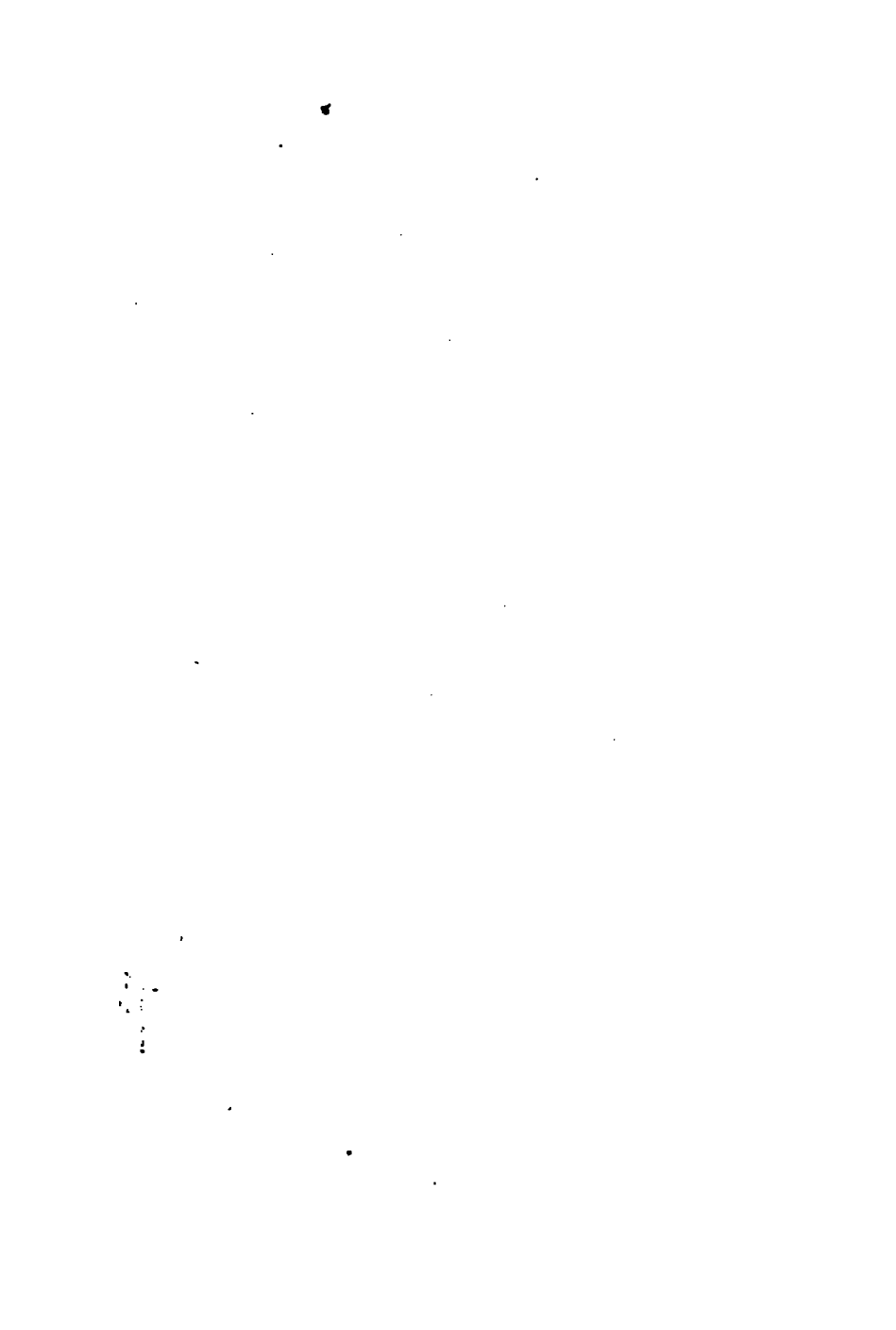
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THOUGHTS

ON

MILLENNARIANISM.

BY THE
REV. WILLIAM W. PYM, A.M.

VICAR OF WILLIAN, HERTS.

FOURTH EDITION, CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

"We, according to his promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—2 PET. iii. 13.

"All the promises of God in Christ are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."—2 COR. i. 20.

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P R E F A C E

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.



TRUTH and Charity being the only safe principles by which we can be guided in the judgment we form, or the opinions we express of others, and both these rules being too often transgressed by what is asserted respecting "Modern Millenarians," it is desirable that those, who conscientiously believe what are called Millenary Doctrines, should be rightly understood. Having been engaged in my public ministry for some months of the year 1827 with these subjects, and finding that it is now even more the fashion than it then was to account them heretical, I have been decided by this, and other circumstances, to print the following pages. In these it has been my endeavour to show, That I do not shrink from supporting what I have publicly taught, and what, on the maturest deliberation, I believe to be true; nor from repeating, what appears long since established, That the doctrines in question are, strictly speaking, Scriptural; and, being so, were considered Orthodox by the primitive Church of Christ "from the time of the Apostles to the Nicene Council." Fearing that the faith of some, in whose welfare I am interested, is liable to be shaken by the opposite opinions so freely, not to say severely, expressed; and believing that, where

nothing is said in reply to objections, many conclude that nothing can be said, I am confirmed in this decision. Here I must express my regret that some, who take the opposite side of this question, do not distinguish between the Orthodox Millenary doctrines of the first three Centuries and a half of the Christian Church, and the heresy which succeeded them, as much of the uncharitable feeling which has been manifested against Millenarians might thus have been avoided. It appears, however, that such feelings have been before excited, when these doctrines have been brought forward as prominently as they deserve; and, without travelling back to the times of St. Jerome and Eusebius the historian, we may find a proof of this recorded by Bishop Newton in his work on the Prophecies. Writing on this subject, he says, that "Dr. Middleton, in his Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers, &c., has done great injustice to Justin Martyr, as well as to several of the Fathers. In treating of the Millennium, (page 26,) he represents Justin as saying, "that all the saints should be raised in the flesh, and reign with Christ in Jerusalem, enlarged and beautified in a wonderful manner for their reception, in the enjoyment of all sensual pleasures, for a thousand years before the general resurrection." *But in the original there is no such clause as that,* "in the enjoyment of all sensual pleasures:" it is an addition and interpolation of the Doctor's own; in order to depreciate the venerable father; and he could not possibly have made it by mistake, he must have done it designedly; for he has cited *the original as far as that clause, and, there stop-*

ping short, has concealed the rest with an &c. If he had fairly cited the whole sentence, he was sensible that every scholar, must have detected the imposition."¹ It is much to be regretted that the unkindly spirit, which prompted such conduct, should not have slept with the dead, but the reverse of this is too apparent at the present hour; and, in some cases, the mantle of departed anti-millenarians has not only fallen on their successors, but, it is to be feared, has imparted a considerable portion of their spirit. In all such cases, however, it is my earnest hope that "modern Millenarians" will not be infected with it; but that, if constrained in self-defence, or for the Truth's sake, to reply to objectors, they will follow the example of that man of God, Richard Hooker, who, under similar circumstances, made this remark, "Your next argument consists of Railing and of Reasons: to your Railing I say nothing, to your Reasons I say what follows." Strongly impressed with the soundness of this principle, and knowing that "he that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now,"² (and who can indulge in unchristian language against another, and say that he loves him?) it has been my endeavour to act upon it, knowing that the cause of Truth is not promoted by a breach of Charity. Hence, if any thing should be found in these pages which shall wound the feelings of any reader, I here express my regret, as I know full well, "There will come a time, when three words uttered with

¹ Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, p. 672.

² 1 John ii. 9.

P R E F A C E

TO

THE THIRD EDITION.

IT having pleased God to make this small work more generally known than the Writer had any reason to expect, he feels it a duty to say, That from the time of his first preaching these doctrines, in the year 1827, for the instruction of his own flock, to the present hour, he has met with nothing to shake his faith in them, but, on the contrary, much to confirm it. Indeed, it is scarcely possible *now* to look around us, without perceiving that some important crisis is at hand ; and, if we bring the light of the sure word of prophecy, with which we are favoured, to bear upon the existing state of things in the prophetic earth, we shall discover it to be that for which "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth," "the manifestation of the sons of God." That a spirit of enquiry has gone forth upon these subjects, which are at this time the most important and interesting committed to the Christian Church, demands the tribute of our thanks and praise to Him, who has

created and still keeps it alive. For thus many will be led to look "for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" and so the day of the Lord shall not overtake them as a thief.

That this may be the case with all into whose hands these few pages shall come, and more particularly with such as are bound to the Writer by the ties of kindred or acquaintance, is the earnest and sincere desire of his heart; and, with this object in view, he commits them confidently to Him who can employ them for that purpose, and whose strength is made perfect in our weakness.

As it respects the work itself, a few verbal alterations have been made in it, several notes have been added, and a short Postscript on 1 Cor. xv. 28. With these exceptions, the work is substantially the same.

Willian Rectory, March, 1831.

CHAPTER I.

On the duty of giving good heed to those parts of Holy Scripture, which are termed Prophetical.

It has been a matter of much surprise to me, as a Minister of Christ, to hear a question raised, by any believer in divine revelation, as to the *duty of studying the prophetical Scriptures*. Without dwelling on the acknowledged principle, that, if it please God to reveal his will to man, it is man's undeniable duty thankfully to receive the *whole* revelation, and diligently to search it, in order to understand what the will of the Lord is: let us turn our attention at once to the written word, and endeavour, from that source, to derive some conclusive information on this subject. If the duty of Christians may be drawn from the example of believers of former times, as that is written in the Scriptures for our learning; and if a confirmation of the same be found in the approving testimony of the Lord to their conduct; but, above all, if we can discover an express command to adopt any line of conduct for which we have the authority of their example, then our case is clear, clear also is our duty on this momentous subject. And precisely such a case we conceive the Scriptures to afford in the example of Daniel the prophet: a man distinguished above his fellows by the testimony of an angel of light, that he was "greatly

beloved ;”¹ and by Jehovah, in his pleadings with his people, as being one of three highly-favoured individuals for whose sake, if for the sake of any, he would spare a land, by averting the judgments which it deserved.² Now, if we look to his employment at the time of which we speak, we shall find it to have been precisely the same with that which we are attempting to prove to be the duty of Christians. For “*having understood by books the number of years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem;*”³ and, having “set his face unto the Lord God, by prayer and fasting,” we find that “the man Gabriel” was sent to assure him of the approving testimony of Jehovah to the labours of his servant, and to reward his diligence with further revelations of the Divine will. Thus, commissioned from above, the angel of light drew aside that wondrous veil which separates futurity from the present scene, and the man of God was enabled, with prophetic eye, to look down the vista of future ages, and to discover much of the hidden counsels of the eternal mind respecting his church and people.

But, if such an example be not sufficient, we turn to Matt. xvi. 1—3, in which our Lord rebuked the spiritual guides of that day, because they understood not the signs of his first appearing. And whence, we ask, were these signs to be drawn? *From the prophetical Scriptures only.* The neglect, therefore, of making them a subject of study,

¹ Dan. ix. 23.

² Ezek. xiv. 14, 20.

³ Dan. ix. 2, &c.

is a *sinful* neglect, or the Lord Christ would not have rebuked it as he did. Our conclusion, therefore, must be this, *that it is our bounden duty to give good heed to them.*

But these Scriptures themselves would set the question at rest, if, after what has been observed, a shadow of doubt could remain. Thus Dan. xii. 10, and Rev. xiii. 18, and xvii. 9, invite us to this exercise; and, according to my view of the authority of the word of God, such an invitation is nothing short of a command.

One passage more remains to be adduced, which so unequivocally declares the mind of the Spirit, that, of itself, it would be amply sufficient to establish the above conclusion. St. Peter, 2 Ep. i. 19, says, "we have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." Here we simply ask, how can we "*take heed*" to that, which we think it our duty to neglect? And how can we "do well," if we neglect that "more sure word of prophecy, whereunto" the Holy Ghost instructs us "to take heed?" Let it also be remembered, that the very subject on which the Apostle was writing, and which led to the above exhortation, was "*the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

CHAPTER II.

On the Characteristic Features of Prophecy.

It must be confessed by every one who reads and believes the Sacred Scriptures, that they contain various revelations of future events given to "holy men of God," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," or "Spirit of Christ, which was in them." It must also be granted that such revelations referred *chiefly* to the interests of the Church of Christ which he had purchased with his blood,¹ and that these communications were made to man from very early periods of this world's history. Though ignorant of what occurred in Paradise, in the (probably short) time of man's innocency; yet, when that state was about to be concluded, a prophecy, or promise,² was given, in which himself and his posterity were deeply concerned. Though this promise was wrapped in mysterious terms, it was gradually unfolded to the church in after ages, as the accomplishment of one of its chief parts drew nigh. In saying which, we pretend not to assert, that the minds of our first parents were not sufficiently enlightened at the time to perceive, for their comfort, a great measure of its hidden meaning. Indeed, we have reason to believe, that it was otherwise; and surely, when their eyes had been opened to the actual nakedness

¹ Rev. v. 9, and xiii. 8.² Gen. iii. 15.

of their condition, and to the moral wreck which sin had wrought within them: when they anticipated the ruin which would overspread their posterity: when they witnessed the late joyous and blessed creation groaning and travailing in pain together with themselves: when they saw the reaction of their own rebellion against God in the creature's rebellion against them; and when the thorns and thistles testified to their face, that the very ground was accursed for their sake, surely they required some such consolation as this promise was fitted to convey! That this consolation was not withheld, is, I think, sufficiently apparent; for we read that "Adam," after receiving this first promise, "called his wife's name *Eve*," referring in that name to the seed, by whom "the blessed hope of everlasting life" was to be given. Again, when she conceived and bare her first-born son, she said, in expectation of the fulfilment of this promise, "I have gotten a man from the Lord,"¹ or, as it is translated by some, "I have acquired a man, even Jehovah." Now these things teach us, that to our first parents a sufficient measure of understanding of the promise was given to console them in their fallen condition; though it is also clear from the same, that they did not fully comprehend the mystery of the promised child being the *woman's* seed, and not the man's, (by which that child should be *eminently the Son of God*:) as it was afterwards more distinctly revealed, "behold a *virgin* shall conceive, &c."² And again, "the Lord hath created a new thing

¹ Gen. iv. 1.

² Isaiah vii. 14.

in the earth, a woman shall compass a man."¹ But, in whatever degree this promise was understood by our first parents, it was still a prophecy, and, possessed that characteristic of all prophecy given by the Apostle Peter, being "as a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in *the hearts*" of those who receive it. And if, such a revelation of the divine counsel concerning the church was then given, when man fell from his high estate, we may now take up the oracles of God, and find in that record the various communications which he has since vouchsafed. There we may observe, that, at sundry times and in divers manners, the Spirit of Christ has moved holy men of old; and, whether it were by vision, or by other means, has continued to make known to the church on earth, more of his purposes concerning it; and, "by the church, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God."² Of these prophetic revelations, some have been *perfectly accomplished*: some *only in part*; and others *remain to be fulfilled*; though of the second kind, or the partially accomplished prophecies, a far greater proportion will be found than we may possibly suppose. Of the first kind, or *perfectly accomplished prophecies*, we may specify, by way of example, the promise made to Abraham in Gen. xv. 13—16; and its recorded fulfilment in Exod. i. 7, 11, 12, and xii. 36, 40; and Josh. xxi. 43—45. To these may be added the captivities of the Jewish Church,

¹ Jer. xxxi. 22.

² Eph. iii. 10.

predicted by Jer. xxv. 8—12, the accomplishment of which is recorded in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14—21. The destruction of Jerusalem, Dan. ix. 26, 27. Zech. xi. 1. Luke xxi. 24. The casting off of the Jews, Deut. xxviii. 64. The *first* call of the Gentiles, Deut. xxxii. 21. Is. lxxv. 1. Rom. x. 19; besides others which might be specified.

Of the second, or *partially accomplished*, I may mention that most important prophecy, contained in Gen. iii. 15, which, in one of its parts, (I mean the existence of the predicted enmity between the woman's and the serpent's seed,) has been receiving accomplishment almost from the time of its delivery to this very hour; though, in other particulars having been but partially accomplished, it waits for its perfect fulfilment, "until the day" of the Lord shall "dawn," when (and not till when) Satan's "head of power" will be completely bruised, he being, till that time, the permitted "god of this world,"¹ and "prince of the power of the air."²

Of the third sort, namely *those prophecies which remain to be fulfilled*, I may particularize the national conversion of the Jews, or, more correctly, of both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, to the faith of Christ, Zech. xii. 10, and x. 7. Hos. xiii. xiv.

The joint call of Jews and Gentiles,* when both

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 4. John xii. 31.

² Eph. ii. 2.

* An idea has for some time prevailed in my mind respecting, what is termed, the second call of the Gentiles, which, I suggest in the shape of a question, for the consideration of others.

shall rejoice together, Deut. xxxii. 43. Rom. xv. 8, 9.

Also a time of unexampled trouble in the earth, Dan. xii. 1. But chiefly, and above all, the second coming of the Lord Jesus, in his Kingly office, to take to himself his great power, and to reign as David's Son and Lord upon David's throne, before his ancients gloriously, Is. xxiv. 23. Zech. xiv. 5. 2 Thess. i. 7. Jude 14.

Whether this second call is not *chiefly* applicable to the descendants of Ham?

The blessing of having the Lord for their God, in other words, of forming the visible church on earth, was foretold by Noah to be first designed for the children of Shem, Gen. ix. 26. Accordingly, to Abraham and his seed the blessing was given, for 2000 years. Next in order, it was predicted to be the portion of the sons of Japhet, who, at the casting off of Shem, were persuaded to come into his tents, or to occupy that station, and to succeed to those church privileges from which Shem had been cast off; and, as nothing is here said by the Spirit of Christ respecting Ham being interested in the blessing when it should be transferred to Japhet, we conclude, that it was the purpose of God to supply his church during "the times of the Gentiles," *principally* from the descendants of Japhet. Hence, though in the first ages of Christianity, the Gospel was preached, and churches were established in Africa, the Gospel did not prevail, and continue amongst that people, as it did amongst the descendants of Japhet, by whom the isles of the Gentiles were divided in their lands, Gen. x. 5. But, if we look to Isa. lxvi. 19, which passage appears to refer to the second call of the Gentiles, the descendants of Ham are there named, as intended, at that time, to be partakers of the benefit.

"When the Vandals first invaded Africa that country was very populous, consisting of about 700 Bishopricks, [more than were in all France, Spain, and Italy together;] but, by the wars between the Vandals, Romans, and Moors, it was depopulated to that degree, that, Procopius tells us, it was next to a miracle for a traveller to see a man." Circiter, A. D. 530.

Sir I. Newton on the Apocalypse, p. 298.

It does not, however, follow from this, that these flourishing churches were composed of the descendants of Ham: it is more than probable that a large proportion were Roman Colonists, and *therefore the children of Japhet*.

It is also here to be remarked, that there are two distinct kinds of prophecy in the word of God, which have been well defined by the terms, "historical" and "discursive."¹ With the former we meet in the important books of Daniel, and the Apocalypse, which bear about them a clear historical order, and, in many cases, contain an express revelation of dates. The latter, we find, almost without exception, in the other parts of Scripture, in which cases, that historical order is wanting.

CHAPTER III.

A general outline of those great events which form the burden of the unfulfilled Prophecies, and the Scriptural expectation of the Church of Christ.

IN attempting to draw a general outline of these great events, which form the burden of the unfulfilled prophecies, a multitude of important subjects pass before the mind. Much care will be required in this part of our work, and more dependance on the Divine Spirit, who is the covenanted teacher of the Church of Christ while she continues in her present state of pupilage. Here, however, one caution must be observed, and it is against

¹ Irving on Prophecy, vol. i. p. 42.

determining *the order of predicted events by the order of narration* in the sacred text. Of the need of this caution we have striking proof, in the prevailing idea of the end of all things following *directly* the second advent of the Lord as drawn from 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24. "But every man in his own order. Christ the first fruits; afterward, they that are Christ's *at his coming*. Then cometh the end—" I ask, *When?* It is replied, "*At his coming*." The sacred text goes on to state, "*when he (Christ) shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*" From which my conclusion is, *That the end cometh not till after the Millenary reign of Christ, or, in other words, till a thousand years after his second coming*; because all enemies will not be put under his feet till the close of that period, [which I conceive to be revealed, Rev. xx. 1—14;] *nor will death, the last enemy, be destroyed till those thousand years are concluded.*

From a careful study of this third part of our subject, the following appear to be some of the most important of those events, to which we proposed to refer.

I. *A time of unexampled trouble to the nations,*^{1*} *the days of which trouble shall be short-*

¹ Dan. xii. 1. Jer. xxx. 5—8. Matt. xxiv. 21.

* It will naturally be enquired, On what nations is there reason to suppose these judgments, or troubles, will fall? The writer's opinion is, "that judgment must begin at the house of

ened¹ "for the elect's sake," and shall conclude with the battle of the great day of God Almighty.²

II. Then shall be brought to pass that chief event, and object of the Church's hope.³ *The Second Coming of the Lord,*^{4*} in the clouds of heaven, at which all tribes of the earth shall mourn.⁵

III. *The first act of Christ's judgment*, or "judicium matutinum," as it was styled by old

¹ Matt. xxiv. 22. Mark xiii. 20.

² Dan. xi. 45. Rev. xvi. 14. and xix. 17, 18.

³ Is. xxv. 9. Acts xxvi. 6. Tit. ii. 13.

⁴ Acts i. 11. 1 Thess. iv. 16. Rev. i. 7. ⁵ Matt. xxiv. 30.

God;" in other words, that the troubles, of which the Spirit speaks in the passages quoted above, will fall on Christendom: the nations of which, having abused their privileges, by mere profession of the name of Christ, "shall be beaten with many stripes," Ezek. ix. 6. Luke xii. 47.

An intimation of the order of judgment is found, I think, in Rev. xix. 11—13, compared with Is. lxiii. 1—4. From these passages we learn, that, when the Lord comes forth in Rev. xix., which he does to judge the Eastern Antichrist, his garments are already dipped in blood, occasioned doubtless by the judgments which shall have been executed on the Western Antichrist, as we learn from Is. lxiii., where Edom is supposed to signify Rome.

* I place the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, at or towards the close of the battle of the great day of God Almighty, for the following reasons. The Scriptures teach, that the wilful, or infidel, king of Daniel and the Apocalypse, and the Papal power (*i. e.* the beast and false prophet, Rev. xix. 20,) shall then come to an end; and St. Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 8, teaches, that the Papal power shall be destroyed "with the brightness of his, the Lord's coming." From which I believe that the Papal power will be destroyed in no other way, though it will be consuming, Dan. vii. 26, "unto the end," as it has been since the judgment sat and took away its dominion, during the French Revolution. Practical infidelity on one side, and "the spirit of the Lord's mouth," 2 Thess. ii. 8, or spread of the Scriptures on the other, will prevent the real increase of the power of the Roman Catholic Church.

writers, or "the morning" of which we read, Psalm xlix. 14, comprising,

"*The first resurrection*,"¹* or "the resurrection of the just,"² for he shall bring all his saints with him.³

The changing of the quick, they "which are alive, and remain"⁴ till that "glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour."

The pleading with all flesh with fire and the sword,⁵ † in which "the slain of the Lord shall be many," n. b. not all.

The descent of Christ on the mount of Olives,⁶ from which mount he ascended.

The binding of Satan,⁷ by which act his "head of power" is bruised by Christ, the woman's seed.

The conversion of the Jews,⁸ ‡ who will look

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 51. 1 Thess. iv. 17. Rev. xx. 5.

² Philip. iii. 11. Luke xiv. 14.

³ Zech. xiv. 5. 1 Thess. iv. 14. Jude 14. ⁴ 1 Thess. iv. 17.

⁵ Is. xxxiv. 1—8, and lxvi. 16. Luke xix. 27.

⁶ Zech. xiv. 4. Acts i. 12.

⁷ Rev. xx. 2.

⁸ Jer. xxiii. 3—8, and xxi. 7—12.

Ezek. xxxvii. Dan. xii. 1, 7. Zech. xii. 10.

* In which passages of St. Paul's Epistles, no mention is made of any resurrection but that of the just.

† See Bishop Horsley's version of "The last words of David," "But in the sabbath they shall be utterly burnt with fire," 2 Sam. xxiii. 1—7.

‡ I place the conversion of the Jews here, because being effected by the Lord's appearing, strictly speaking, it is his act.

"Paul's conversion had a pattern in it, and it is a pattern of the extraordinary conversion of the Jews, his countrymen, who, 'tis thought, shall be called after the same manner; and it is most likely they shall be so."—*Goodwin's Works*, vol. iv. part 1. p. 116; see also 1 Tim. i. 16.

"Which general call of the Jews, it is justly thought, shall be by some appearance of Christ after the example of Paul, who therein was the type and first fruits of such a kind of call."—*Resurrection Revealed*, p. 331.

on him whom they have pierced by their past unbelief, and shall mourn for him with godly sorrow.

*The second call of the Gentiles.*¹

*The restitution of all things*² *in this part of the Creation of God*, viz. the new heavens and the new earth, for which "we, according to his promise,³ look;" that is, the renovation of *the face* of this earth, and of the surrounding firmament, by the baptism of fire, with which the Lord Christ shall have baptised it, in his pleadings with all flesh.*

IV. *The descent of "the holy city, new Jerusalem,"* the "city which bath foundations," for which Abraham and the patriarchs looked.⁴

V. *The raising the Tabernacle of David*,⁵ when Christ, as David's son, and David's Lord, shall sit on his throne and reign over the house of Jacob

¹ Deut. xxxii. 43. Is. lxvi. 12, 19. Zech. viii. 22, 23.
Acts xv. 16, 17.

² Acts iii. 21. Rom. viii. 19—23. ³ 2 Pet. iii. 13. Is. lxx. 17, 18.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 2. Heb. xi. 10, xii. 22, xiii. 14.

⁵ Is. xvi. 5. Jer. xxx. 9. Amos ix. 11, 12. Acts xv. 16, 17.

* We have no more reason to suppose that this planet on which we dwell, and the surrounding atmosphere, will be *utterly destroyed* by the judgment here predicted, than we have for saying, that they *utterly perished* in the time of Noah's flood. That the *face* of the earth, and the works that are therein, will then be destroyed, and that God will renew them, we believe; for "as a vesture shalt thou *change* them, and they shall be *changed*." Ps. cii. 25, 26. But that the work of destruction will proceed no further than it did in the former judgment by water is, I think, clear, from St. Peter having introduced the one, as illustrative and typical of the other. See also on this subject Ben Ezra, vol. ii. p. 239.

for ever,¹ when "there shall be one Lord, and his name one."²

VI. *The Church*, or "King's daughter," brought to Christ, as Eve, the bride, was brought to the first Adam, being bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.³

VII. *Her children made princes in all lands*,⁴ having authority, some over ten cities, some over five,⁵ i. e. reigning on the earth,⁶ in honour and degree, according to their faithfulness in using the means of grace while in the body.*

¹ Jer. xxiii. 5—8. Matt. xxii. 42—45. Luke i. 32, 33.

² Ezek. xxxiv. 24, and xxxvii. 22. Zech. xiv. 9.

³ Ps. xlv. 13, 14. Gen. ii. 22, 23. Eph. v. 30—32.

⁴ Ps. xlv. 16. Matt. xix. 28. 1 Cor. vi. 2. ⁵ Luke xix. 12—19.

⁶ 2 Tim. ii. 12. Rev. v. 10, and xx. 6.

* It has been suggested to the author, that he has here fallen into the common error of applying a parable too literally. Had the words "i. e. reigning on the earth," &c. been omitted, I should have acknowledged the remark to be just: but, as this is not the case, I confess the objection appears to me to be without weight.

It may possibly be inquired, *How shall the glorified saints reign in the new, or renewed, earth?* They will reign, I conceive, for God and Christ, as Satan and his angels, (those "principalities, and powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world," of whom St. Paul speaks, Eph. vi. 12,) have reigned, and still are reigning, against the Lord, and against his anointed. The difficulty of conceiving this in our minds may, probably, arise from entertaining carnal ideas of *Kings on the earth*, connected with the fashion of this world, which passeth away. But the spirits of the just are represented in Scripture, as looking forward, after their reunion with their bodies, to *reigning on the earth*: (Rev. i. 6, and v. 10. and xx. 6.) not however after the fashion of this present world. A belief also of the scripture doctrine of the ministry of angels, as that is revealed to us, 2 Kings ii. 11, and vi. 17. Heb. i. 14, &c. which angels are engaged in promoting the will of God and the interests of his kingdom, will teach us, that such an occupation in the spiritual world will be no new thing, when they, who shall be so engaged, will be "as the angels of God." Here it must not be

With the fulfilment of these great events it is to be believed that the seventh Millenary will commence, *because these are plainly revealed in Scripture*; when the church triumphant will begin to "reign on the earth,"¹ with her glorified Head, after the Lord shall have renewed the face² of it; and as in its present state, lying under the curse, it has been the scene of her Lord's humiliation and her own, so, the curse being then removed, it shall become the scene of her triumph, "when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."³ On the same authority, (I mean of the written word, for nothing else can be decisive on such a subject as this,) I conceive that the state of the renewed earth will be such that "the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."⁴ And in this case, as in every other of which we know, where Satan has endeavoured to destroy or pervert God's handy work, he will have outwitted himself, the Lord having just overruled the success of his devices for the greater manifestation of his own attributes. For in that glory of the new earth, which shall excel⁵ the former, and commence, when the enemy of God and man receives his

¹ Rev. v. 10, and xx. 6.

² Ps. civ. 30.

³ Is. xxiv. 23, and xlix.

⁴ Is. lxv. 17.

⁵ Is. lxv. 16—18.

forgotten, that St. Paul teaches the same truth, when he says, Heb. ii. 5, "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come of which we speak." To whom, then, hath he put it in subjection? *To men.* To Christ, as "the second Adam, the Lord from heaven," and all his saints with him. Dan. vii. 14, 27.

overthrow, there will be an eminent display of the "depth of the riches both of the wisdom and power of God!"

If we bring together those particulars which are revealed in different parts of the Bible, concerning this future state, we shall perceive that there must be *saints in glory*,¹ whom the Lord shall have brought with him, partakers of the first resurrection, and for whom a city is prepared, as suitable to their condition, as their glorified bodies will be suitable to their perfect spirits. We shall also learn, that there shall be *men in the flesh*,² whose earthly condition will be marked by great blessedness, the days of their lives being lengthened, and they, dwelling in perfect security, shall enjoy the privilege of ready access to God.³ *The brute creation also will be sharers in the rest of that period*,⁴ being under the influence of the peaceful reign of our "Melchizedec, King of Salem;"⁵ for the ferocity of their nature being removed,* "they

¹ Zeeh. xiv. 5. 1 Cor. vi. 2. Jude 14. Rev. v. 10, and xx. 6.

² Is. lxxv. 19—24.

³ Is. lxxv. 24.

⁴ Is. xi. 6—9, and lxxv. 25, and xxxv. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 25.

⁵ Heb. vii. 1.

* Our early notions are so deeply impressed upon us, that it is difficult to remove them, and to substitute others in their stead: which is strikingly illustrated in the case to which reference is here slightly made. Accordingly, when the Spirit of the Lord tells us, that in the millennial state "the lion shall eat straw like the ox," &c., we are hard of belief, thinking it strange that it should be so. But, are we prepared to assert, that the lion and other beasts of prey fed in Paradise as beasts of prey feed at this hour? Or must we not rather acknowledge, that this was one amongst many instances of the curse of Adam's covenant coming upon the beasts of the field, as it did upon the field itself, for man's sake? The

shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain;" and the reason is added, "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."¹

An intimation, I think, is given, that *the language in that time and state shall be one*, even "the Jew's language."²

The close of the seventh Millenary will be marked by *the loosing of Satan for "a little season;"*³ which, if I mistake not, it has been conjectured, will probably accord with the time by which the sixth, or present, Millenary will be "shortened for the elect's sake." *A partial apostacy of the nations* will follow, the effect of Satan's liberty,⁴ which will result in *The second act of Christ's judgment* or "*Judicium vespertinum.*" The particulars of this will consist of *The serpent's head being finally bruised by the seed of the woman: The second resurrection; and the putting every enemy under Christ's feet for evermore.*⁵

A want of sobriety of mind is ascribed to those who entertain such expectations: and it is objected to them, That "an interval will elapse between the present time and the Millennium" (viz. one hundred and seventy years,) "sufficient to accom-

¹ Is. xi. 9.

² Is. xix. 18. Zeph. iii. 9.

³ Rev. xx. 7.

⁴ Rev. xx. 8.

⁵ Rev. xx. 9--15.

really strange thing is, that one animal should prey upon another, and the removal of this will only be one effect of the restoration of the primæval peace, which prevailed during the time of man's innocency, and which will be restored in that season of rest, which remaineth for the people of God.

plish *by ordinary means, without the aid of miracles*, the great works of education and evangelization, which are now begun."¹ We cannot assent to this theory, for various reasons, of which the following will suffice for our present purpose. The question, in fact, becomes one of plain arithmetic, from which it appears that it will require an interval of three hundred and fifty years, at the least, of which period *every day* must be marked *by a repetition of the Pentecostal miracle*² of 3,000 souls actually converted unto Christ, before the Heathen nations shall become his inheritance.³ Now if the conversion of 3,000 souls, *on one only occasion*, has been acknowledged, for 1800 years, to be the effect of a *miraculous effusion* of the Spirit, how can we suppose that a work, which will require *a repetition of the same miracle daily* for at least three hundred and fifty years, shall be effected in one hundred and seventy, "*by ordinary means without the aid of miracles?*" To which side of this question a want of sobriety of mind most fitly belongs, judge ye. But should any one enquire, *Why* we are to expect the accomplishment of those events, which have been before enumerated? I reply, Because God has given us ground for that expectation in his word; and has done this, with all the plainness and simplicity of which language is capable. This being the case, we cannot refuse to entertain it without making God a liar. If it be added, But others, who are equally anxious to receive and honour his word, do not agree with you, and ex-

¹ Sober Thoughts on Prophecy, p. 32.

² Acts ii. 41.

³ Ps. ii. 8.

plain those parts of Scripture, to which you refer, in a spiritual or allegorical sense, I know it; and know also, with one of former days, that "spiritualizing or allegorizing the Scriptures, hath been the womb of many errors, and the cloud of many truths."¹

I moreover believe, there is much inconsistency in the practice here condemned, licence being taken to allegorize some things, and to literalize others, (if I may be permitted to make such a word) in order to bear out preconceived ideas. Thus, for example, many believe *literally* that the Jews shall be converted to Christ,² because it is revealed, but they allegorize *the method* of that conversion, which God has alike revealed, and therefore do not allow that it shall be *by looking on him whom they have pierced*.³ They also believe *literally* that Christ shall come again at the end of the world, (or, more correctly, age,) but they allegorize, or spiritualize, *the objects* of his coming, which are revealed as clearly as language is capable of revealing any facts to the understandings of men.

They believe also, that after the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, and the Jews converted to Christ, a second call of the Gentiles shall take

¹ Christ's appearance the second time for the Salvation of Believers, by John Durant, 1653.

"I hold it for a most infallible rule in Expositions of Sacred Scripture, that, where a literal construction will stand, the farthest from the Letter is commonly the worst. There is nothing more dangerous than this licentious and deluding art, which changeth the meaning of words as Alchymy doth or would do the substance of metals, maketh of any thing what it listeth, and bringeth in the end all truth to nothing."—Hooker's Eccl. Pol. Book v. § 59, p. 275.

² Is. xi. 12. Jer. iii. 18. Ezek. xxxvii. Hos. i. 11. ³ Zech. xii. 10.

place, yet they allegorize, or spiritualize, *the way* by which it will be effected; and, unmindful of the utter inadequacy of any existing means to effect these great ends, they hastily declare that the blessing of God on existing instruments will be abundantly sufficient to do that, which the Lord Christ has condescended to tell us, He has reserved for the putting forth of his own arm, and for the glorious manifestation of his own divine power, in that earth, which was the scene of his humiliation when his heel was bruised by his spiritual foe. Now, all that we desire is, that this rule of allegorizing may be fairly and consistently applied; and, if it be so, in the cases to which we have referred, *the very things which are foretold* will fall under the fatal system; when the actual conversion of Jew and Gentile to Christ will be no longer, what God teaches us that it shall be, a simple truth, which shall literally be accomplished in its season, but a matter of doubtful disputation, a spiritual or allegorical thing, of no definable meaning whatsoever!* Hence we beg also to observe, that though men may be stout in rejecting these expectations, it was not so with an Apostle of the Lord, who expressly referred to the promise of Christ of new heavens and a new earth; (which promise is only given in one prophet, Isa. lxxv.

* That *some* passages of Scripture will only admit of a spiritual or allegorical meaning, we readily acknowledge, such for instance as, if literally explained, involve a manifest absurdity; as when we read "the stars of heaven fell unto the earth," they being larger than the earth, the meaning cannot in that case be literal; but, because the application of the principle is admitted in such cases, it is childish to apply it indiscriminately, merely because we are hard of belief, or the things revealed do not accord with *our preconceived opinions*.

17, 18, and lxvi. 22,) and declared, by the Spirit, that the fulfilment of this promise was the object of his own and of the Church's hope.¹ But for what should the Church look to that event, as an object of joyful expectation, if her members were to have no interest in that glorious scheme of things? For what should it have been a subject of cheering anticipation to the Apostles, if they, who indulged this hope, and who undoubtedly would depart hence long before that event should arrive,² were to have neither part nor lot in that future state of glory? But the tale is plain, and, like almost every important truth, is readily understood. *The earth, under the curse*, had been the scene of their Lord's humiliation, and of their own, as followers of that Lord. *The earth delivered from the curse*, was decreed to be the scene of their Lord's triumph, during a reign of righteousness and peace, and where he is, there they will be also, beholding his glory, and partaking of his joy, as their "Melchizedec, King of Peace." Hence Abraham, *in this sense*, saw the day of Christ, and was glad. Hence Moses, from the top of Pisgah, viewed with interest the promised land, which, could only have been an object of disappointment to him, had he not seen by faith the latter-day glory, reserved for him in that land. Hence David could trust to the performance of every promise, found in the "everlasting covenant," which was "ordered in all things and sure," respecting his throne and kingdom; and the

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 13.

² 2 Thess. ii. 1—6.

raising of that righteous Branch, who, as the true David, should sit upon his throne for evermore! Hence all the prophets, who spake as they were moved by the Spirit of Christ, searched diligently into these things; and, with the feeling of Israelites indeed, they loved to dwell upon that theme, which, whilst it magnified Jehovah's undeserved grace to them, exalted the chosen people of the Lord above every other people, and threw around their wild but lovely land a character of sacred interest, which, without these associations of future glory, it possessed not. Hence, in after ages, the Apostles and Disciples of the Lord, partakers of the same faith, and having drank from the same fountain those waters of refreshing, enquired When he would restore *the Kingdom to Israel*? An enquiry fraught, in my esteem, with far more meaning than the dull carnal expectation which is commonly assigned to it. An enquiry, made by men who looked for a glory to be revealed, which would excel every measure of earthly glory that had yet been witnessed by their fathers: by men who believed that the hill of Zion would become, in very deed, a fair place, the city of the Great King, and in all the fulness of the blessing of Christ, *the joy of the whole earth*!

Hence, at this very hour, the outcasts of Israel and Judah, amidst their wanderings through this world's waste and howling wilderness, are cherishing the expectation of such glorious times reserved for them in their own land; and, under all their sorrows, the fruit of the imprecation of their fathers, they cherish this belief, that "Thou, Lord,

shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place which thou hast made for thee to dwell in: in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.”¹

CHAPTER IV.

An enquiry after the time at which the Prophetic Dates lead us to expect the Second Coming of the Lord, with some observations on the principle of calculating the same.

‘THAT there shall be such a happy period as the Millennium; that “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High,” Dan. vii. 27; that Christ shall have “the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession,” Psalm ii. 8.; that “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,” Is. xi. 9; “that the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved,” Rom. xi. 25, 26; in a word, *that the kingdom of heaven shall be established upon earth*, is the plain and express doctrine of Daniel and all the Prophets, as well as of St. John; and we daily pray for the accomplishment of it in praying, “Thy kingdom come.” But of all the prophets, St. John

¹ Exodus xv. 17.

is the only one who hath declared particularly, and in express terms that the martyrs* shall rise to

* Though it becomes me to bow with much humility before the opinion of Bishop Newton, and I fully agree with that learned man in the general theory here advanced, yet, I think, he is not borne out by Scripture in confining the First Resurrection to "*the Martyrs*." It rather appears to extend to "*the Prophets, and to the Saints, and them that fear God's name, small and great,*" Rev. xi. 18., who shall have lived before that "*glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*" In support of this opinion I cannot refrain from adding the testimony of one whose name has been before mentioned, and which harmonizes so entirely with the Scripture view of this matter, that, I feel assured, none can complain of the length of the following extract.—"There is some question whether or no all believers shall share in the glorious salvation at Christ's next coming. For they who hold a coming of Christ distinct from that unto judgment general, they incline to think, that as many of the good and godly Israelites fell short of and did not enjoy Canaan, who were yet saved; so many of those who are truly godly, albeit there is no question nor doubt of their eternal salvation, yet they question whether or no they may not come short of, and have no share in the salvation of Christ's second coming. And that no believers shall partake of that, but only such as believe and expect, or look for him, as they are characterized here, Heb. ix. 28. And this they think was pointed at in the type of the land of Canaan, and aimed at in that place, Heb. iii. 11, and iv. 1.

"But, because I think that all that fear God, even 'all both small and great,' all saints, though in a different degree and measure, shall share in the glory of the salvation at Christ's next coming, I say, because of this, I do not think, neither can I urge any such thing as intended here. For I conceive by this phrase, 'them that look for him,' we are to understand believers in truth, such as upon whom the word and work of the Gospel is come in power and full efficacy. For where the Gospel so works, it raiseth up souls to expect or look for the coming again of Christ, because the grace of God, in the Gospel appearing, 'teacheth not only to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, but to look for the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ,' Tit. ii. 11—13. Hence it was, that Paul doth by this very thing demonstrate the truth of the Gospel's coming and working upon the Thessalonians in power, and in the Holy Ghost, because it shewed this as the manner of its entrance or reception among them, that it made them not only turn from idols to serve the living and true God, but also it made them to wait, or as it is here, *to look for Christ from heaven*, 1 Thess. i. 5, 9, 10. And indeed souls sincerely, savingly, spiritually wrought upon, are raised up to this, as to a principal part of that work, (which therefore may well be put for

partake of the felicities of this Kingdom, and that it should continue upon earth a thousand years; and the Jewish Church before him, and the Christian Church after him, have further believed and taught, that these thousand years will be the seventh Millenary of the world.* A pompous heap of quotations might be produced to this purpose both from Jewish and Christian writers; but I choose to select only a few of the most material of each sort.

‘Of the Jewish writers, Rabbi Ketina, as cited in the Gemara or gloss of their Talmud, said, that “the world endures six thousand years, and one thousand it shall be laid waste, (that is, the enemies of God shall be destroyed,) whereof it is said, ‘The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day,’ Is. ii. 11. Tradition assents to Rabbi Ketina; as out of seven years, every seventh is the year of remission, so out of the seven thousand years of the world, the seventh Millenary shall be the Millenary of remission, that “God alone shall be

the whole, as denominations and descriptions often are by the chief parts,) viz. to long and expect, and therefore to eye and observe the coming again of the Lord Jesus, to instate them in the full, and pure, and immediate enjoyment of that salvation, which he hath purchased, and called them unto the participation of.” Christ’s appearance the second time for the Salvation of Believers, by John Durant, 1653, page 29—31.

From 1 Cor. xv. 23. it is clear, that the First Resurrection cannot be confined to the Martyrs. The Apostle says, “But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits: afterward, they that are Christ’s, at his coming.”

Are “the Martyrs,” *alone*, they that are Christ’s? Are not rather all the saints? If so, the inference is clear, all the dead saints shall rise at his coming.

* “Thus in the creation of the world seven days were spent, and in these seven days seven thousand years were figuratively included.” Cyprian’s Exhort. to Martyrdom, A. D. 252. sect. ii. p. 179.

exalted in that day." It was the tradition of the house of Elias, who lived two hundred years, or thereabouts, before Christ, and the tradition might, perhaps, be derived from Elias the Tishbite, that "the world endures six thousand years, two thousand before the Law, two thousand under the Law, and two thousand under the Messiah." It was also the tradition of the house of Elias, that "the just whom God shall raise up, (meaning at the first resurrection,) shall not be turned again into dust."¹

Of this period of six thousand years, five thousand eight hundred and thirty-three have passed away, according to the commonly received chronology, leaving one hundred and sixty-seven years, from this present time, [A. D. 1829,] to complete the sixth Millenary, that is, to the commencement of the *seventh*, or "Millenary of remission," in which "*the kingdom shall be established upon earth.*" That the sixth Millenary shall not be permitted to run to its close, but shall be an imperfect period, is, I conceive, a divine truth; for, according to the testimony of our blessed Lord and his holy prophets, a period preceding the seventh Millenary shall be marked by unexampled trouble; and, when our Lord revealed this fact, he added, for the consolation of his church under the prospect, that, "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but, for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened."²*

¹ Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, p. 668, 669.

² Matt. xxiv. 21, 22.

* "—The world was ordained of God to endure, as Scripture and all learned men agree, six thousand years: now of the

The important question therefore to be solved is this, *By how much, is there reason to suppose, those days shall be shortened, according to the received chronology?* And it is the more important, because much diversity of opinion has existed on this subject. Here, however, I expect to be reminded that "the folly of interpreters has been to foretell times and things, as if God designed to make them prophets, &c.;" and that, it is our wisdom, to make "history expound prophecy, of which it is the best and man's only key." Without waiting to observe that this latter opinion savours not a little of, what appears to have been, the practice of some among the Pharisees, who were upbraided by our Lord for their ignorance of the *signs* of his first coming; and, candidly confessing, that I pretend not to foretell times and things, knowing that God designed not to make me a prophet, (in any other sense, at least, than that of a preacher and teacher of his revealed Truth,) suffer me to observe, that, confining ourselves to "the sure word of prophecy," and to "the history of past ages," its legitimate expositor, I humbly conceive an answer may be obtained to the above enquiry. Neither let it be objected, That, if it were so, all men would agree as to the fact. Are all agreed that Jesus is the Christ? Ask the Jews, and let them furnish a reply to this, and at

number are gone five thousand five hundred and fifty-two : (preached in the year of our Lord, 1552;) so that there is left only four hundred and fifty lacking two; and this is but a little time, and yet this time *shall be shortened, as Scripture plainly witnesseth*, for the elect's sake." Bishop Latimer's Sermon "The Day of Judgment."

the same time to the objection, raised against the exposition of any prophecy, from the diversity of men's minds upon the subject. But, I may be told, the Jews are not fair judges in that case, And why not? Because they are prejudiced, you say, and refuse to examine fairly into the question. And may we not reply to many who object to our view of these subjects, "*mutato nomine, de te Fabula narratur?*" Are those men fairer judges of the prophetic question, who, refuse to examine into its merits, because they are prejudiced, and yet pronounce sentence against it? But, if we are so wedded to our preconceived opinions, as to think it quite impossible we can attain to more enlarged or more correct ones; or so satisfied with our present attainments in the knowledge of divine things, as to suppose we cannot add to our present stock, it would be strange indeed, if we made any material advances in that science, which, above all others, requires a child-like teachableness of spirit, and a complete surrender of prejudice and of human schemes, in order "that we *may* know the things which are freely given to us of God."

Here another objection may be made to the further prosecution of this enquiry, taken from our Lord's words to his disciples just before his ascension. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons,* which the Father hath put in his own

* It may be well to remind the reader that, at the time when our Lord made the above reply to the enquiry of the apostles, the day of his second coming had not been revealed to himself. [Of course we here speak of the manhood of the Saviour.] "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son, but the Father.*" Mark

power.”¹ In reply to which it may be fairly argued, that, because it was not for that generation, who

¹ Acts i. 7.

xiii. 32. But as our blessed Lord testified to the Jews, that the Father shewed him all things, and *would shew him greater works than those*, of which he had spoken, so He did shew him this, and as a reward moreover of his meritorious sufferings. Rev. v. 4, 5. In this Christ, as head of the church, received that “promise of the Father,” for which he waited in common with his members, Acts ii. 33, which, doubtless, was fulfilled to him on his entering, by his own blood, into the holy place: Heb. ix. 11—13; “and, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost,” he shed forth that Spirit upon his members, as the Comforter, John xiv. 16, and xv. 26, or the sealing or witnessing Spirit. [Compare Eph. i. 13, 14; 1 John v. 13; Rom. viii. 16.] Thus, as the Son of Man, or “because he is the Son of man,” John v. 27, having received this promise from the Father, he received also the further revelation of his will, “which God, [i.e. the Father] gave unto him, expressly for this purpose, “to shew unto his servants,” Rev. i. 1, which he did by his servant John: whose distinction, in this respect, above his fellows, was signified by the typical action of laying in Christ’s bosom at the supper, as our blessed Lord’s qualification for revealing the mind and will of the Father to his church, is taught by a similar figure, “The only begotten Son who is *in the bosom* of the Father, he hath declared him,” John i. 18. Hence in Rev. v. we meet with an account of this transaction, from which we learn, that what had not been shewn to him on earth, was shewn to him, *as the Son of Man*, in heaven, even the contents of the sealed book of God’s decrees, as the reward of his sufferings. Hence, though the apostle wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon,” “the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David prevailed, to open the book, [*being worthy to receive wisdom*, v. 12.] and to loose the seven seals thereof.” And, having done this, he shewed to his servants the contents of it, and, as I humbly conceive, furnished them with the means of obtaining a reply to the enquiry—“When he would restore the kingdom to Israel?”

It may be objected, That if we are capable of deriving from *Daniel’s numbers*, the time of the second coming, so might our Lord’s disciples, at the time of his first appearing, because they had the same numbers. Our reply to which is, That if we possessed nothing besides these numbers, we should be as unable to do this as they were; but other sources of information upon this important subject have been opened to us, in the revealing of the man of sin, and in the fulfilment of other, at that time, unfulfilled prophecies, which enable us to fix the periods of the

witnessed our blessed Lord's first Advent, to know the times or the seasons when he would restore again the kingdom to Israel, it by no means necessarily follows that it should be withheld from every generation; and the very accomplishment of the then unfulfilled prophecies would tend to reveal them. But a sufficient, and to me satisfactory, answer was furnished by Christ himself, when he supplied his Church with certain signs by which the approach of those times was to be recognized, as surely, as when we "behold the fig-tree and all the trees shoot forth, we see and know of our own selves that summer is now nigh at hand."¹ Conceiving, therefore, that *one object* of the prophecies was to *direct the expectation of the Church to the great events which form the burden of them*, of which the greatest is the Second Advent of the Lord; and, as each successive prophecy was accomplished, some fresh sign would be afforded of the period at which we had arrived in the course of this world: I feel it nothing less than a duty to endeavour, if possible, to obtain a reply to the foregoing enquiry. Looking therefore to the prophetic dates of Daniel only, I believe an answer may be found; and that, from this source alone, we may ascertain, By how much or thereabouts, (for I speak not of *the day or the hour*) the Sixth,

¹ Luke xxi. 29, 30. 2 Tim. iii. 1—5. 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

commencement of some of Daniel's numbers which they possessed not; and hence to draw conclusions respecting them. As I am speaking with a single reference to the revealed numbers in Daniel, I have not referred to the additional light which was thrown upon them by the Apocalypse, of which, of course, all must be aware.

or present, Millenary will fall short of its completion? In other words, *By how much "those days shall be shortened according to the commonly received chronology?"* The visions in Daniel, which contain the numbers to which I refer, are found in the seventh and three last chapters. In the seventh chapter, a representation is made, under the emblem of "a little horn," of the Papal power, which should arise in the Western Roman Empire.* Of this power it is foretold that "the saints of the Most High shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of a time," that is, that the people of God, or the true worshippers who worship the Father in spirit and in truth, shall be permitted to be under the dominion of the Papacy for three *prophetic* years and a half, which amount to twelve hundred and sixty *prophetic* days, or as many *natural* years. It is also foretold, that, at the close of this appointed time, "the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it to the end."¹ By which is understood, that, though the dominion which that power shall be permitted to exercise over the saints during the appointed season, should, at the end of that season, be taken away, yet that it

¹ Dan. vii. 25, 26.

* By *The Earth*, in prophetic language, is understood "the territories, which were the seats of the four great Empires," the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman.

The *Roman Empire* is also to be considered in two parts, the *Eastern* Roman Empire, of which Constantinople was the capital, the *Western* Roman Empire, of which Rome was the capital.

should exist in some other, and less powerful condition "unto the end:" its *destruction* being reserved for the brightness of the Lord's coming, as the Spirit of truth testifies by the mouth of St. Paul."¹ The next step to be taken, in order to obtain a reply to our enquiry, is to *fix the period from which this date commences*. And, when I say that the year of our Lord, 533, appears to me quite satisfactory, I say it advisedly, after much consideration, and because, as yet, I have heard no objection of *any weight* against that year. But, above all, am I satisfied with the correctness of that date for the commencement of the period, because the power which was then granted to the head of the Romish Church, by an Imperial Edict,* was the power which that Church afterwards employed to make war with the saints, and by which she strove to wear them out; whereas other acts of the Papacy, such as the taking away the service in the native tongue in the Christian Church, were only varied exercises of that power which was actually given to the Papacy by the Edict of which I speak, and which therefore, cannot be said correctly to accomplish what these words require, that "*the saints of the Most High shall be given into his hand.*" But they were given into the hand of the Papal little horn by the Imperial edict of A.D. 533; and, it is little better than trifling, to say, That they were not then given,

1 2 Thess. ii. 8.

* By an Edict of the Roman Emperor Justinian, bearing date A.D. 533, copies of which are still extant, the Bishop of Rome was declared Head of the Church, and infallible in all matters of faith.

because the Papal power was not in a condition to take full advantage of the gift: which is sometimes urged. A sum of money may be given into my hand to-day, for some specific purpose, and I may not be in a condition to apply it to that specific purpose till this day year, but no man will therefore deny *that it was given into my hand to-day*. The striking correspondence also of the predicted particulars, which should conclude this period of twelve hundred and sixty years, with the circumstances which took place in the Western Roman Empire at the close of the same period, taken from the year before-named, and which form subjects of history, tends also to confirm this belief. For, if to the year of our Lord 533 we add 1260 years, we shall find that we are brought down to the year of our Lord 1793, or to the time of the French Revolution: one effect of which political confusion was to take away altogether, for a season, the Papal dominion; and, though it was afterwards partially restored, it then received a blow from which it has not recovered, and, we are persuaded, never will recover, even "unto the end."*

In the twelfth or concluding chapter of the last vision of Daniel, three numbers are revealed, two of which will be sufficient for our present purpose. The first of these is a repetition of that, with which we have before met, in the 7th chapter, namely,

* The reader need not be reminded of the events which have taken place in the prophetic earth, since the above sentiments were first published, by which the Papal dominion has been still more weakened than it had been previously, and thus exhibits a true picture of that decline, under which, we have reason to expect, she will be consuming unto the end.

“a time, times, and the dividing of a time,” or twelve hundred and sixty years, which, it is supposed, points out the Western Roman Empire; and this opinion is corroborated by the chief events of the vision being connected with that Empire. The other number to which I refer, is that of 1335, found in the twelfth verse, which verse informs us, that “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days:” and appears to refer to the *Millennial blessedness*; and, if we are right in supposing that this number is connected with the former of 1260, and therefore with *that great event* which was to take place, according to Dan. vii. 25, in the Western Roman Empire, in 1260 years (as we believe) from A.D. 533, our conclusion is, That, in 1335 years from the same year of our Lord, the blessedness here predicted shall commence. Hence we obtain this reply to our enquiry, That the sixth, or present, Millenary, shall be shortened by 133 years, or thereabouts, “by the establishment of Christ’s glorious kingdom in the earth, about A.D. 1867.”

“As it is expected by some, and not without reason, that the actual appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ will take place before the commencement of the Millennium, and if so, by some years sooner than the time specified above, I subjoin the argument, upon which this expectation rests, derived from one of the numbers in Daniel, which has not been referred to in this small work. “But further information concerning his appearing and kingdom may be gathered from another number of Daniel,

a number of great importance, inasmuch as it appears to divide this last number, viz. the 45 years, into two parts, or, in other words, to assign to the early part of it many of those remarkable events, of which we have been speaking.

“The number to which I now refer is contained in the 14th verse of the eighth chapter. Daniel, in his vision of the eastern antichrist, hears a certain saint making the enquiry, “*How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice*, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?” And the answer is, “Unto 2300 days,” or years.

“There has been a great diversity of opinion respecting this number, arising chiefly from the difficulty of fixing the period of its commencement. But, if we may reason from analogy, I believe the three former numbers will lead to some definite conclusion concerning this also. The former as well as the 70 weeks, Dan. ix. 25, which relates to our Lord’s first advent, [which also well deserves our attention, as its wonderful fulfilment shews us in what light to regard these sacred numbers,] clearly specify some great public transaction, from which we are to commence dating. “The 70 weeks, ‘from the command to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem,’—the 1260 years ‘from the giving of the saints into the hands of the little horn.’ What great public event, then, have we from whence to commence the 2300 years? I answer, *the complete re-establishment of the daily sacrifice*, which was effected in the time of Ezra, and according to Mr. HORN, B.C.

453. [See his Chronological Index. vol. iii. p. 78.]
 —“It was a grand *national act, signed and sealed* by the people, on a day set apart for that purpose, Nehem. ix. 10.”—“If we date, then, from this epoch, it will bring us to the year of our Lord 1847: ‘then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.’ B.C. 453 + A.D. 1847 = 2,300. Now this cleansing of the sanctuary must include the seventh or last vial, which brings the great and terrible day of the Lord, when he shall come with his holy ones to take vengeance on the wicked adversary, who perishes at the battle of Armageddon. The cleansing of the sanctuary ending in the year 1847, leaves a portion, viz. 21 years, of the last number of Daniel, unoccupied, which we may suppose is reserved for the settling of Christ’s kingdom, and for the ordering and establishing of it in righteousness.”—*Hooper on the Second Advent*, p. 36.

Since this work was originally written, Mr. Fynes Clinton’s valuable Scriptural Chronology has appeared, and from this it is shewn, that the real age of the world at the birth of Christ was 4,138 years, and not 4,004, according to the received chronology; in other words, that we are advanced 134 years farther in the 6th Millenary than is commonly supposed, which agrees in a remarkable manner with *the conclusion*, at which we had arrived, from the foregoing argument. Here of course it will be asked: How do you now understand the shortening of the days, for the elect’s sake, upon which that argument proceeds? I reply, the meaning of the Scripture is made clear from Mr. Clinton’s Chronology, viz. that the days which shall be shortened, are *the days of the great tribulation*

only, through which a part of God's people shall pass, according to that saying of Daniel, (xii. 10.) "many shall be purified, and made white, and tried."

In two papers on "the Scriptural Chronology of the World," which appeared in the November and December numbers of the Christian Observer for 1828, a calculation of years has been made with much ingenuity on the principle of Lunar time : from which the writer arrives at the following conclusion, which applies to the subject before us. "If my suggestions be correct, we are very rapidly approaching to the *six thousandth lunar year of the world*. And, if March 21, 1828, saw the close of A.M. 5779, according to my statement, *the last day of the six thousandth lunar year of the world will be July 15, 1870.*"

I mention this in order to shew that a calculation, made on a very different principle from that commonly adopted, *leads to one and the same important conclusion*, namely, That the predicted events, which are to take place at the ushering in of the Millennium, *are nearer than is commonly supposed*, and that in very deed *the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh*.

The principles on which the prophetical numbers are commonly calculated, are these.

"A time," in the language of Prophecy, is taken for a year, which, whether we are to understand as a *prophetic year* (in which *each day* represents a *natural year*,) or as a *natural year*, the context and circumstances of the Prophecy must decide. See Dan. iv. 32, and vii. 25.

A Prophetic year consists of twelve Prophetic months.

*A Prophetic month of thirty Prophetic days;** and therefore a prophetic year, (or "Time" in one of its senses) of *three hundred and sixty Prophetic days.*

But a *Prophetic day* is equal to a *natural year*,† as we learn from Ezek. iv. 6. Hence we have weeks of years, months of years, &c.

* A *Prophetic month* is said to consist of *thirty* Prophetic days, because three times and half a time, or forty and two months, must consist of months of thirty days, in order that they may amount to twelve hundred and sixty Prophetic days.

† It has been objected to this interpretation, That *weeks*, or *sevens*, is an expression that may be used to signify either sevens of days, or sevens of years; and that the period between one Sabbatical year and another was ordinarily termed a week, without any figure being supposed; and if so, that the prophecy of Daniel ix. 24, which is commonly referred to on this question, affords no precedent for supposing that in prophetic language a day means a year. Hence it is incorrect to say, That the "time, times, and the dividing of a time" of Daniel, or 1260 days, are so many *prophetic* days; but that they are to be considered as 1260 *natural* days, or as three *natural* years and a half, which are yet to come. To this objection a comparison of St. Paul's testimony concerning the "man of sin," with that of Daniel respecting "the little horn," affords I conceive, a sufficient reply: as it teaches, in this case at least, the necessity of considering a prophetic day as a natural year.

St. Paul declares by the Spirit, 2 Thess. ii. 3—8, that at a certain time, which he specifies, "that man of sin" shall be revealed: he tells the Thessalonians, that they know what withholdeth; or what, at that time, hindered his appearing; and adds, that this revelation of the man of sin shall take place, when he who letteth, or hindereth, shall be taken out of the way; in other words, when the temporal power of the Romans shall come to an end.

Daniel had before spoken of this man of sin under the emblem of the little horn; and he had also pointed to the season of his appearing, which strikingly accords with that of St. Paul: viz. when the fourth, or Roman, kingdom should be broken, and divided into ten parts. Dan. vii. 8, 19—24. To Daniel also it was revealed, That the saints should be given into his hand until a time, times, and the dividing of a time, that is, for three years and a half, or for 1260 days. Now, if these 1260 days are only *natural* days, or three *natural* years and a half, which are yet to come, what has

Such being the principles of calculation, any person is competent to apply them to the numbers which are revealed.

CHAPTER V.

Replies to the objections, which are commonly made, against the doctrines of "Modern Millenarians."

It must be a subject of concern to every person really influenced by the Spirit of Christ, to observe the hard measure which "Modern Millenarians," as they are termed, too commonly receive at the hands of those who differ from them. Indeed, whenever the rules of Truth and Charity are transgressed, the cause of both, which is the cause of God, must suffer. Conceiving that this has happened in the present instance, and that the various unfounded assertions which are made respecting modern Millenarians, and the doctrines which

that man of sin been doing since the power, which in St. Paul's days hindered his appearing, has been taken out of the way? What, moreover, becomes of the truth of Daniel's prophecy, and St. Paul's, That he should be revealed *when the temporal power of the fourth, or Roman, kingdom should be broken and divided into ten parts?* From that time his open opposition to, and self-exaltation above all that is called God, was to commence, on the joint testimony of Daniel and St. Paul; and, on the testimony of history, actually did commence. In furtherance of which, the cause is found of a great part of the persecutions by which the Papal Church, or man of sin, laboured to wear out the saints of the Most High, Dan. vii. 25, during a time, times, and the dividing of a time.

they bring, prove a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to many, and hinder the free course of God's Truth, it becomes me shortly to reply to some of these assertions of which I speak. One of the most common respecting these doctrines is, That they are *heretical*. Were it literally true that these scouted doctrines were heretical, it would well become every Orthodox Christian, whether teacher or disciple, to reject them, from a zeal for God, and the cause of his truth; but, as I am thoroughly persuaded this is *not* the case, and that "modern Millenarianism," so far from being a revival of heresy, is, in fact, *no heresy at all*, but in its principal, if not in all its features, *the doctrine of the Scriptures, and of the primitive Church*, I shall endeavour, for the Truth's sake, to disprove the charge. Of course, having made this declaration, I must refer to proof, to which let us now proceed. That the doctrines in dispute are *scriptural*, has been sufficiently shewn by the various scripture references already made, in support of the positions which have been advanced; and, without making a lengthened repetition of them in this place, I have only to request the reader to consider those passages, as in the sight of God, with the sincere desire of ascertaining the truth, and I can readily anticipate the result. That it was *the doctrine of the primitive church*, from the time of St. John to the Council of Nice, about the year of our Lord 325, is so well established by Burnet in his "Theory of the Earth," that I shall merely transcribe the chapter which contains that proof, as furnishing a satisfactory reply to every *objector* on this ground.

“You have heard the voice of the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, declaring the future Kingdom of Christ; next to these, the *Primitive Fathers* are accounted of good authority. Let us therefore now enquire into their sense concerning this doctrine, that we may give satisfaction to all parties; and both those that are guided by Scripture alone, and those that have a veneration for antiquity, may find proofs suitable to their inclination and judgment.

“And to make few words of it, we will lay down this conclusion, *That the Millennial Kingdom of Christ was the general doctrine of the Primitive Church, from the times of the Apostles to the Nicene Council, inclusively.* *St. John* outlived all the rest of the Apostles, and towards the latter end of his life, being banished into the Isle of *Pathmos*, he writ his *Apocalypse*; wherein he hath given us a more full and distinct account of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, than any of the Prophets or Apostles before him. *Papias*, Bishop of *Hierapolis*, and Martyr, one of *St. John's* Auditors, as *Irenæus** testifies, taught the same doctrine as *St. John*. He was the familiar friend of *Polycarp*, another of *St. John's* Disciples; and, either from him, or immediately from *St. John's* mouth, he might receive this doctrine. That he taught it in the Church, is agreed on all hands; both by those that are his followers, as *Irenæus*; and those that are not well-wishers to this doctrine, as *Eusebius* and *Jerome*.

“There is also another channel wherein this

* *Iren. Lib. 5. c. 33.*

doctrine is traditionally derived from *St. John*, namely, by the Clergy of *Asia*; as *Irenæus* tells us in the same chapter. For arguing the point, he shews that the Blessing promised to *Jacob* from his father *Isaac*, was not made good to him in this life, and therefore he says, *without doubt those words had a further aim and prospect upon the times of the Kingdom*: (so they used to call the Millennial state) *when the just, rising from the dead, shall reign; and when Nature, renewed and set at liberty, shall yield plenty and abundance of all things: being blest with the dew of Heaven, and a great fertility of the earth. According as has been related by those Ecclesiasticks or Clergy, who see (saw) St. John, the Disciple of Christ; and heard of him what our Lord had taught concerning those times.* This, you see, goes to the fountain-head. The Christian Clergy receive it from *St. John*, and *St. John* relates it from the mouth of our Saviour.

“ So much for the original authority of this doctrine, as a Tradition; that it was from *St. John*, and by him from Christ. And as to the propagation and prevailing of it in the Primitive Church, we can bring a witness beyond all exception, *Justin Martyr*,* contemporary with *Irenæus*, and his senior. He says, *that himself and all the Orthodox Christians of his time, did acknowledge the Resurrection of the flesh* (suppose the first resurrection,) *and a thousand years reign in Jerusalem restored, or in the New Jerusalem.*

* Dial. with Tryphon, the Jew.

According as the Prophets Ezekiel, and Isaiah, and others, attest with common consent. As St. Peter had said before, Acts iii. 21, That all the Prophets had spoken of it. Then he quotes the 65th chapter of Isaiah, which is a bulwark for this doctrine, that never can be broken. And to shew the Jew, with whom he had this discourse, that it was the sense of our Prophets, as well as of theirs, He tells him, that a certain man amongst us Christians, by name John, one of the Apostles of Christ, in a Revelation made to him, did prophesie, that the faithful believers in Christ should live a thousand years in the New Jerusalem; and after that should be the general Resurrection and day of judgment. Thus you have the thoughts and sentiments of Justin Martyr, as to himself, as to all the reputed Orthodox of his time; as to the sense of the Prophets in the Old Testament, and as to the sense of St. John in the Apocalypse. All conspiring in confirmation of the Millenary Doctrine.

“ To these three witnesses, *Papias, Irenæus,* and *Justin Martyr*, we may add two more within the second Age of the Church: *Melito*, Bishop of *Sardis*, and *St. Barnabas*, or whoever was the Author of the Epistle under his name. This *Melito*, by some is thought to be the Angel of the Church of *Sardis*, to whom *St. John* directs the Epistle to that Church: *Apoc. iii. 1.* But I do not take him to be so ancient: however he was Bishop of that place, at least in the second Century, and a person of great sanctity and learning. He writ many Books, as you may see in

St. Jerome; and, as he notes out of *Tertullian*, was by most Christians reputed a prophet. He was also a declared *Millenary*, and is recorded as such, both by *Jerome* and *Gennadius*. As to the Epistle of *Barnabas*, which we mentioned, it must be very ancient, whosoever is the Author of it, and before the third Century: seeing it is often cited by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who was himself within the second Century. The genius of it is very much *Millenarian*, in the interpretation of the *Sabbath*, the *promised Land*, a *Day* for a *thousand years*, and concerning the *Renovation of the World*. In all which he follows the footsteps of the Orthodox of those times: that is, of the *Millenarians*.

“So much for the first and second Centuries of the Church. By which short account it appears, that the *Millenary Doctrine* was *Orthodox* and *Catholick* in those early days. For these Authors do not set it down as a private opinion of their own, but as a *Christian Doctrine*, or an *Apostolical Tradition*. 'Tis remarkable what *Papias* says of himself, and his way of learning, in his Book, called *The explanation of the words of the Lord*, *St. Jerome* gives us an account of it: He says in his Preface, *He did not follow various opinions, but had the Apostles for his Authors. And that he considered what Andrew, what Peter said: what Philip, what Thomas, and other disciples of the Lord. As also what Aristion, and John the Senior, Disciples of the Lord, what they spoke. And that he did not profit so much by reading Books, as by the living voice of these persons, which resounded from them to that day.* This

hath very much the air of Truth and Sincerity, and of a man, that, in good earnest, sought after the Christian Doctrine, from those that were the most authentick Teachers of it. I know *Eusebius* in his *Ecclesiastical History*, gives a double character of this *Papias*: in one place, he calls him, *a very eloquent man in all things, and skilful in Scripture*: and in another, he makes him a man of *a small understanding*. But what reason there is to suspect *Eusebius* of partiality in this point of the *Millennium*, we shall make appear hereafter. However, we do not depend upon the Learning of *Papias*, or the depth of his understanding: allow him but to be an honest man, and a fair witness, and 'tis all we desire. And we have little reason to question his testimony in this point; seeing it is backed by others of good credit; and also because there is no counter-evidence, nor any witness that appears against him. For there is not extant, either the Writing, Name, or Memory, of any person, that contested this doctrine in the first or second Century. I say, that called in question this Millenary doctrine, proposed after a Christian manner; unless such Hereticks as deny'd the Resurrection wholly; or such Christians as deny'd the divine authority of the Apocalypse.

“We proceed now to the Third Century. Where you find *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Victorinus*, Bishop and Martyr: *Nepos*, *Ægyptius*, *Cyprian*, and, at the end of it *Lactantius*: All openly professing, or implicitly favouring the Millenary doctrine. We do not mention *Clemens Alexandrinus*, con-

temporary with *Tertullian*, because he hath not any thing, that I know of, expressly either for or against the *Millennium*. But he takes notice that the *Seventh Day* hath been accounted *Sacred*, both by the Hebrews and Greeks, because of the *Revolution of the World*, and the *Renovation of all things*. And giving this as a reason why they kept that day *Holy*, seeing there is no Revolution of the World every seven days, it can be in no other sense than as the *Seventh Day* represents the *Seventh Millenary*, in which the Renovation of the World, and the kingdom of Christ, is to be. As to *Tertullian*, *St. Jerome* reckons him, in the first place, among the Latin *Millenaries*. And though his Book, about the *Hope of the Faithful*, also that about *Paradise*, which should have given us the greatest light in this affair, be both lost or suppressed; yet there are sufficient indications of his Millenary opinion in his Tracts against *Marcion*, and against *Hermogenes*. *St. Cyprian* was *Tertullian's* admirer, and inclines to the same opinion, so far as one can judge in this particular; for his period of *Six Thousand Years*, and making the *Seventh Millenary* the consummation of all, is wholly according to the analogy of the Millenary Doctrine. As to the two Bishops, *Victorinus* and *Nepos*, *St. Jerome* vouches for them. The writings of the one are lost, and of the other so changed, that the sense of the Author does not appear there now. But *Lactantius*, whom we named in the last place, does openly and profusely teach this doctrine, in his *Divine Institutions*; and with the same assurance, that he does other

parts of the Christian Doctrine. For he concludes thus, speaking of the *Millennium*, This is the doctrine of the *Holy Prophets*, which we Christians follow. This is our wisdom, &c. Yet he acknowledges there, that it was kept as a mystery or secret amongst the Christians, lest the Heathens should make any perverse or odious interpretation of it. And for the same or like reason, I believe the Book of the *Apocalypse* was kept out of the hands of the Vulgar for some time, and not read publicly, lest it should be found to have spoken too openly of the fate of the *Roman Empire*, or of this Millennial state.

“So much for the First, Second, and Third Century of the Church. But, by our conclusion, we engaged to make out this proof as far as the *Nicene Council* inclusively. The *Nicene Council* was about the year of Christ 325, and we may reasonably suppose *Lactantius* was then living: at least he came within the time of *Constantine’s* Empire. But however the Fathers of that Council are themselves our witnesses in this point. For, in their *Ecclesiastical Forms*, or *Constitutions*, in the chapter about the *Providence of God*, and about the *World*, They speak thus: *The World was made meaner or less perfect, providentially; for God (did) foresee that man would sin. Wherefore we expect New Heavens and a New Earth, according to the Holy Scriptures: at the appearance and Kingdom of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* And then, as *Daniel* says, (chap. vii. 18.) *The Saints of the most High shall take the Kingdom. And the Earth shall be Pure*

Holy, the Land of the Living, not of the dead. Which David, foreseeing by the eye of faith, cries out (Ps. xxvii. 13,) I believe to see the good things of the Lord, in the Land of the Living, Our Saviour says, Happy are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth, Matt. v. 5, and the Prophet Isaiah says, (chap. xxvi. 6,) the feet of the meek and lowly shall tread upon it. So you see, according to the judgment of these Fathers, there will be a kingdom of Christ upon earth; and moreover, that it will be in the New Heavens and the New Earth. And in both these points, they cite the Prophets and our Saviour in confirmation of them.

“Thus we have discharged our promise, and given you an account of the doctrine of the Millennium, or future Kingdom of Christ, throughout the Three First Ages of the Church, before any considerable corruptions were crept into the Christian Religion. And those Authorities of single and successive Fathers, we have sealed up all together, with the declaration of the Nicene Fathers, in a Body. Those that think Tradition a Rule of Faith, or a considerable motive to it, will find it hard to turn off the force of these Testimonies. And those that do not go so far, but yet have a reverence for Antiquity and the Primitive Church, will not easily produce better Authorities, more early, more numerous, or more uncontradicted, for any Article that is not fundamental. Yet these are but seconds to the Prophets and Apostles, who are truly the Principals in this cause. I will leave them altogether, to be examined and weighed by

the Impartial Reader. And because they seem to me to make a full and undeniable proof, I will now at the foot of the account set down our second Proposition, which is this, *That there is a Millennial State, or a future Kingdom of Christ, and his Saints, Prophesied of and Promised in the Old and New Testament; and received by the Primitive Church as a Christian and Catholic Doctrine.*"*

Here permit me to make the following enquiries. Are not the leading doctrines of these primitive Millenarians precisely the same with those which are condemned at this hour as composing "modern Millenarianism?" "The first Resurrection," "The Renovation of the World," or "New Heavens and a New Earth," "The promised Land," "The Sabbath," "A Day for a thousand years," "The reigning on earth," "The New Jerusalem," these were esteemed Scripture Truths by all the Orthodox Christians of those primitive times: the whole scheme was then held "Orthodox and Catholic," "A Christian Doctrine, or an Apostolical Tradition, received by the Christian Clergy from St. John, and related by St. John from the mouth of our Saviour." Why are these opinions *now* to be stigmatized as *heretical*? If, in the three first and purest ages of the Church of Christ, when the Scriptures were probably best understood, these doctrines were held to be *true*, why are they now to be stamped as *false*, and men to be cautioned against entertaining them, nay even against reading the works which are published on this subject? In

* Burnet's Theory of the Earth, Book iv. chap. 6.

fact when we go to the fountain head, and examine into the real merits of this question by the light of revelation, and the recorded opinions of the Apostles and primitive Fathers of the Christian Church, a re-action takes place, equal and in an opposite direction to that force which has been employed against us; and the tables are turned: for it actually appears, that, "modern Millenarians" are, strictly speaking, "Orthodox," in maintaining what our Lord had taught, and what in the purest ages of his church was believed; and that, if any, the impugnors of these doctrines are alone heretical. In saying which I desire not to render railing for railing, but merely to shew, that, *if the maintainers of the one set of opinions or the other must be heretical*, it cannot possibly be those who agree with the doctrines of the earliest Church of Christ and the Apostles of the Lord.

I had not intended to have made any addition to the above extracts; but finding much stress laid by some on the opinions of St. Jerome and Eusebius, it is necessary to add the concluding part of the chapter, from which I have already quoted so largely.

"Having dispatched this main point, to conclude the Chapter on this Head of our discourse, it will be some satisfaction possibly to see, *How a Doctrine so generally receiv'd and approv'd, came to decay and almost wear out of the Church, in following Ages.* The Christian Millenary Doctrine was not called in question, so far as appears from History, before the middle of the third Century; when *Dionysius Alexandrinus* writ against *Nepos*, an *Egyptian* Bishop, who had declared himself

upon this subject. But we do not find that this Book had any great effect; for the declaration or constitution of the *Nicene Fathers* was after; and in *St. Jerome's* time, who writ towards the end of the Fourth Century, this doctrine had so much credit, that he, who was its greatest adversary, yet durst not condemn it, as he says himself. *Quæ, licet non sequamur, tamen damnare non possumus; quia multi Ecclesiasticorum virorum et Martyres ista dixerunt. Which things or doctrines, speaking of the Millennium, tho' we do not follow, yet we cannot condemn. Because many of our Churchmen, and Martyrs, have affirmed these things.*

“ And when *Apollinarius* replied to that Book of *Dionysius*, *St. Jerome* says, that not only those of his own sect, but a great multitude of other Christians did agree with *Apollinarius* in that particular. *Ut præagâ mente jam cernam, quantum in me rabies concitanda sit. That I now foresee, how many will be enrag'd against me, for what I have spoken against the Millenary Doctrine.*

“ We may therefore conclude, that in *St. Jerome's* time, the Millenaries made the greater part in the Church; for a little matter would not have frightened him from censuring their opinion. *St. Jerome* was a rough and rugged Saint, and an unfair adversary, that usually run down, with heat and violence, what stood in his way. As to his unfairness, he shews it sufficiently in this very cause, for he generally represents the Millenary Doctrine after a *Judaical* rather than a *Christian* manner. And in reckoning up the chief Patrons of it, he always skips *Justin Martyr*, who was

not a man so obscure as to be overlooked ; and he was a man that had declared himself sufficiently upon this point, for he says, *both himself and all the Orthodox of his time, were of that judgment*, and applies both the *Apocalypse* of *St. John*, and the 65th chap. of *Isaiah*, for the proof of it, as we noted before.

“ As *St. Jerome* was an open enemy to this Doctrine, so *Eusebius* was a back friend to it: and represented every thing to its disadvantage, so far as was consistent with the fairness of an Historian. He gives a slight character of *Papias*, without any authority for it: and brings in one *Gaius*, that makes *Cerinthus* to be the author of the *Apocalypse* and of the *Millennium*; and calls the Visions there *monstrous stories*. He himself is willing to shuffle off that book from *John* the *Evangelist* to another *John* a *Presbyter*; and to shew his skill in the interpretation of it, he makes the *New Jerusalem* in the 21st chap. to be *Constantine's Jerusalem*, when he turned the Heathen Temples there into Christian. A wonderful invention. As *St. Jerome* by his flouts, so *Eusebius* by his sinister insinuations, endeavour'd to lessen the reputation of this Doctrine; and the art they both used, was, to misrepresent it as *Judaical*. But we must not cast off every doctrine which the Jews believed, only for that reason; for we have the same Oracles which they had, and the same Prophets; and they have collected from them the same general doctrine that we have, namely, that *there will be a happy and pacifick state of the church, in future times*. But as to the circumstances of this state we differ very much: They

suppose the Mosaical Law will be restored with all its pomp, rites, and ceremonies: whereas we suppose the Christian Worship, or something more perfect, will then take place. Yet St. Jerome has the confidence, even there where he speaks of the many Christian Clergy and Martyrs that held this doctrine: has the confidence, I say, to represent it, as if they held that *Circumcision, Sacrifices,** and all the Judaical rites, should then be restored. Which seems to me to be a great slander, and a great instance how far men's passions will carry them, in misrepresenting an opinion which they have a mind to disgrace.

* Here it will probably be remarked, that Modern Millenarians believe there will be *sacrifices* in the Millenary state. Conceiving that it does not affect the *main question* at all, whether they believe this or not, of one thing I am assured, That, if modern Millenarians may be allowed to speak for themselves on this subject, their ideas will not be found so unscriptural as by many they are represented. They find in the last nine chapters of Ezekiel, the account of a vision, which was seen by the Prophet in the five and twentieth year of the captivity, the scene of which was laid in the Holy Land. Amongst other things it contains a description of a Temple, its buildings, chambers, measure, parts, and ornaments, and of the divine glory taking possession of it: it describes chambers for the Priests, ordinances for them, an altar, its measure and ordinances; the division of the land, the portions of the twelve tribes, and various other particulars. The first question to be settled is, Whether this be a part of God's word? If so, it must be true: and, as Ezekiel was a Prophet of the Captivity, *at that time* it was a Prophecy, or Prophetic Vision, and therefore *to be accomplished*. The next enquiry is, Has it ever been accomplished since that time? If so, *when*? If not, it remains to be; and as some circumstances of the vision, and of the prophecies or visions of Ezekiel immediately preceding, refer to the latter day glory, if correct in that belief, then they say, There must be sacrifices amongst the *Israelites in the flesh* in those times, (Zech. xiv. 16—21.) because instructions are there given by the Spirit for the altar and its services and sacrifices, and if this be the word of the Lord, not one jot or tittle shall fail, till all be fulfilled.

This is the sum of the matter, and all that is asked of those, who hastily condemn it, is to give some satisfactory explanation of Ezekiel's vision. To say that it is figurative, is merely begging the question. Figurative of what? The difficulty yet remains.

“But as we have reason to blame the partiality of those that opposed this doctrine, so on the other hand, we cannot excuse the Patrons of it from all indiscretions. I believe they might partly themselves make it obnoxious, by mixing some things with it, from pretended Traditions or the Books of the Sibylls, or other private Authorities, that had no sufficient warrant from Scripture : and things, sometimes that nature would not easily bear. Besides, in later ages, they seem to have dropt one half of the doctrine, namely, the *Renovation of Nature*, which *Irenæus*, *Justin Martyr*, and the Ancients join inseparably with the Millennium. And, by this omission, the doctrine hath been made less intelligible, and one part of it inconsistent with another, And when their pretensions were to reign upon this present earth, and in this present state of Nature, it gave a jealousy to Temporal Princes, and gave occasion likewise to many Fanatical Spirits, under the notions of Saints, to aspire to dominion, after a violent and tumultuary manner. This I reckon as one great cause that brought the doctrine into discredit. But I hope by reducing of it to the true state, we shall cure this and other abuses, for the future.

“It never pleased the Church of *Rome* ; and so far as the influence and authority of that would go, you may be sure it would be deprest and discountenanced. I never yet met with a Popish Doctor that held the *Millennium* ; and *Baronius* would have it pass for a Heresie, and *Papias* for the Inventor of it; whereas, if *Irenæus* may be credited, it was received from *St. John*, and by him from the mouth of our Saviour. And neither *St.*

Jerome, nor his friend Pope *Damasus*, durst ever condemn it for an *heresy*. It was always indeed uneasy, and gave offence to the Church of *Rome*, because it does not suit to that scheme of Christianity, which they have drawn. They suppose Christ reigns already, by his Vicar, the Pope, and treads upon the necks of Emperors and Kings. And if they could but suppress the *Northern Heresie*, as they call it, they do not know what a *Millennium* would signifie, or how the Church could be in a happier condition than she is. The *Apocalypse* of *St. John* does suppose the true Church under hardship and persecution, more or less, for the greatest part of the Christian Ages : namely, for 1260 years, while the Witnesses are in Sackcloth. But the Church of *Rome* hath been in prosperity and greatness, and the commanding Church in Christendom, for so long or longer, and hath ruled the nations with a rod of iron ; so as that mark of the true Church does not favour her at all. And the Millennium being properly a reward and triumph for those that come out of persecution, such as have lived always in pomp and prosperity can pretend to no share in it, or benefit by it. This has made the Church of *Rome* have always an ill eye upon this doctrine, because it seemed to have an ill eye upon her. And as she grew in splendour and greatness, she eclipsed and obscured it more and more : so that it would have been lost out of the World as an obsolete error, if it had not been revived by some of the Reformation.”*

* Burnet's Theory of the Earth, Book iv. chap. 6. p. 123--125.

That any unprejudiced mind can reject the doctrines of the Millennium, after it has been shewn that they were received as "Orthodox" during the three first Centuries of the Christian Church, is marvellous, and that on the testimony of its "open enemy," that "rough and rugged saint," and "unfair adversary," St. Jerome, and its "back friend" Eusebius, who lived in later times! But there is no accounting for tastes. This, however, I must request for myself, that I may be permitted to believe what the Orthodox Christians of the three first Centuries believed, what they received from St. John, and St. John from the mouth of our Saviour.¹

Another, and not uncommon idea with which we meet is, that *the students of Prophecy are somewhat presumptuous in venturing to foretel certain events, being unmindful of this Scripture truth, that "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God."* I confess it has rather puzzled me to discover where the presumption of Millenarians is found. It must, I think, be admitted as a sound rule of scriptural exposition, that we should not give an allegorical sense to any passage of Holy Writ, if it will fairly and consistently admit of a literal interpretation. Students of Prophecy act on this principle. They say, and truly say, that many a plain and precious promise of God to his Church has been virtually nullified by the liberty, which men take, of allegorizing the Scriptures.

¹ See Resurrection Revealed, p. 42. See also Edward the Sixth's Catechism, p. 361 of Vol. of Fathers of the English Church.

Now which is the greater act of presumption, to give to plain words their plain meaning, and to believe the facts thus plainly revealed; or, denying their plain meaning, to assert that they mean something else, which, in many cases, is no comprehensible meaning at all? But, we are reminded, that "secret things belong unto the Lord our God:" from which we are to conclude, that modern Millenarians should not meddle with Prophecy. A trifling oversight, I suspect, induces men to advance such a position. "*Secret things*," in Scripture, are opposed to "*things which are revealed*:" by the former I understand such subjects as the Divine Essence, the Hypotatival or Personal Union, the Eternal Decrees, all, confessedly above reason, and for that reason necessarily "secret." But, surely, it is a confusion of terms to say that we are to understand by this word *secret* what the Spirit of Christ has *revealed* to the Prophets, what is written in the Scriptures for our learning, and what the same Spirit encourages us to search; and, for neglecting which, as applicable to the First Advent of Christ, the Lord himself rebuked the Pharisees in the days of his flesh.

But then *Modern Millenarians predict certain events, and that is surely presumptuous?* As it has been often and truly said, That no music is so bad but there are ears bad enough to enjoy it, so no argument is so weak but there are minds weak enough to receive it; and therefore, weak as this objection is, and weak because it is untrue, it should not pass unnoticed. Modern Millenarians are misrepresented in this thing. *They do not Pro-*

phesy, "nor wear a rough garment to deceive;" but *this* they do, and by God's grace will do: they believe what the Spirit of Christ has plainly testified in his word, and they unreservedly declare, *That what God has there foretold He will literally perform*; because his word is like himself, and He is the unchangeable Jehovah, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," "with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning."

Again, we are warned by others of the *danger of making more than one use of Prophecy*: We are assured, *That it is to be principally studied in its fulfilment*, and that *History is its only legitimate expositor*. That Prophecy is to be studied in its fulfilment, I am perfectly aware. I am aware also that the object of such study, is to establish the Truth of God, and to learn thereby, that the God of the Scriptures is the only living and true God.¹ But I am quite unprepared to acknowledge that it is its *principal*, much less its *only* use. Nay, I believe, that Prophecy was given to the Church *principally* for another purpose: which was to inform her of her future destinies, and to keep her children on the watch, lest those predicted events should overtake them unawares. For why should the Church of God stand so much in need of the former use of Prophecy? If it were God's Church it must necessarily believe in God. I have before referred to, what I conceive to be, the unsoundness of the principle of making History the only expositor of Prophecy, considering it to have been a prevailing fault of the Jews, at

¹ Isa. xlii. 7, 8. xli. 13, 14. xlii. 9, 10.

the time of our Lord's first coming, and which, as I have observed, laid them open to a just rebuke from his holy lips. But, I moreover think that the conduct of Simeon, and Anna, and Joseph of Arimathea, "who waited for the kingdom of Heaven" and "for the Consolation of Israel," is placed in striking contrast to the ignorance and want of faith, respecting the first Advent of the Lord, which so generally prevailed at that time; and is recorded as forming a bright exception to both. And for what? In the one case for our learning, that we may follow their faith: in the other for our admonition, "lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." Now if the First Advent of the Lord was an event of so great importance to the Church, which all must admit, that it became her to be prepared for His appearing, in obedience to the voice of the Prophets, the duty of watchfulness for the Second Advent will be so much the greater, as the latter event is more important than the former, and as the predicted glories of Messiah's *Kingly* office occupy a larger portion of the prophetical writings than either of the other offices which he was ordained to perform; and, if we are the children of the light and of the day, that day of the Lord shall not overtake us as a thief.¹ If this reasoning be unsound, why did our Saviour utter these words? "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 1—5.

may open to him immediately. *Blessed are the servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if I shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.*¹ I may be told, That the uncertainty of the period of the Lord's return, is used, in the above parable, as a motive for watchfulness in every age of the Church. Be it so. Then how much rather is it intended for *that age which, "the Scripture and all learned men agree" in teaching us, shall be the last, and therefore the age in which the Lord shall come!* "But take ye heed, behold I have told you all things," "and what I say unto you I say unto all, WATCH."²

Besides the former objections, some consider the study of Prophecy to be more speculative than practical, rather calculated to nourish curiosity than to feed the soul. In such sentiments I cannot concur, because experience has proved the reverse to be true, within the range of my own observation. Indeed, if required to pass an opinion, I should say, that one peculiar excellence of meditating on Prophetical subjects is, their fitness for practical application. Neither need we marvel at this. The very remembrance of *what they are* is sufficient to shew why they are practical, why, by the grace of God, they are awakening in their effect. The bringing before men *the promised return of Christ* at the end of this dispensation:

¹ Luke xii. 35.

² Mark xiii. 24, 37.

the setting forth *the objects of that return*, as the Scripture teaches, and which are thus intelligible to common understandings, being neither more nor less than the plain facts which are plainly foretold in the word of God: *the awful accompaniments of Christ's appearing in his Kingly character*, to reign with his Church, and to destroy his enemies, as he has revealed: *the establishment of that "kingdom under the whole heaven,"* of which prophets have prophesied from Enoch to St. John; and, above all, *the nearness of the time* when these events shall take place, are, in my esteem, subjects of most awakening interest; and, I bless God, they have been found so when scripturally and faithfully declared. That the chief doctrines of the Gospel are moreover inseparably connected with them, none can deny, who have made the trial. For example, the two natures of Christ: his offices: the mystical union of himself with his members: his vicarious sufferings, resulting in "the glory set before him," and the consequent glory of that body of which he is the Head: the clear exhibition of the two spiritual kingdoms of the woman's and the serpent's seed; and the daily fulfilment of one part of that prophetic declaration concerning each, contained in the judgment pronounced on the serpent after the fall: the agency of the Spirit in the present dispensation, as the vicegerent and representative of Christ: the work of the Spirit in the personal sanctification of every individual member of that mystical body, in whom Christ is found "the hope of glory:" these, and others which might be specified, are doctrinal and practical subjects which

naturally attend the consideration of the Millenary doctrines, where they are Scripturally treated, and of which, so treated, none, I think, can say they are *more speculative than practical*. But one part of this objection remains to be noticed, I mean that which represents these doctrines as *calculated to nourish curiosity*; for what has just been said, if correct, sufficiently shews that they are fitted to *feed the soul*. If this be so, I do not regard it as an objection; for, if these subjects raise curiosity, it is evident they excite attention, and if they excite attention, one great step is gained towards effectual preaching. Indeed, all who have had experience in this work of preaching, will readily confess, that the prevailing want of interest in things spiritual, is a cause of just regret; and is, in fact, a bar to the usefulness of a ministry, which if one subject will remove more than another, that subject must be considered the more valuable.

There are, moreover, some who condemn the idea of *Satan's head not having been completely bruised already by the seed of the woman*; and, in support of their opinion, remind us that it is written "*having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*" It requires no great exercise of understanding to conceive how a work, which was to be effected gradually, and by various acts, would warrant in its progress the use of such language as the above. Thus in the case of a war between two nations, in which the one was commonly worsted, it would be perfectly sound sense, and strictly true, to say of the victorious party,

at the end of each engagement, or each campaign, "*having* spoiled his adversary he had gone into quarters," or taken any other step you please; yet the other party might still have resources left, and not the slightest intention of yielding, so long as he had any power of opposing his hitherto victorious foe. And so it is as respects this doctrine. Our blessed Lord, as the seed of the woman, "*spoiled principalities and powers,*" *on various occasions*: in his wilderness temptation: in casting out devils from those possessed; and most gallingly so, I should conceive, to Satan, in empowering fallen men to do the same: by his death he did this eminently: by his rising again: by his ascension into Heaven, when he "*led captivity captive, and received gifts for men.*" But who will say, That, our Lord *having* spoiled principalities and powers in his first conflict in the wilderness, there was no need of the later acts? Yet on the principle which I am combating, we must say this, in order to be consistent. The Scriptures however are clear and satisfactory on the subject. They teach us that so far as Christ, the woman's seed, has proceeded with the predicted work of bruising Satan's head, Satan has been spoiled, *but no further*; for they plainly assert that he possesses *now* no trifling dominion in this world, of which they say, "*since Christ's death he is the god,*"¹ "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that *now* worketh in the children of disobedience."² Hence St. Peter cautions us against our adversary the devil, and feelingly

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 4.

² Eph. ii. 2.

exhorts us to resist him. Hence St. James repeats the exhortation. Hence St. Paul urges us to "put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Hence he goes on to assert that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against *principalities*, against *powers*, against *the rulers of the darkness of this world*, against *spiritual wickedness in high places*."¹ Hence he encourages us, as he encouraged tempted believers in his own time, with his assurance, that "the God of peace *shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly*."² Now all these exhortations, warnings and encouragements, were written *some years after* that act had been performed, to which St. Paul had referred in another place, saying, "*having* spoiled principalities and powers, &c." How could these things be, if Satan's head of power had been *finally* and *completely* bruised by the death of Christ, as it is asserted?

Besides these popular objections, *Ridicule* is pressed into the service against "modern Millenarians;" and whilst some ridicule the idea of a "*First Resurrection*," others express themselves with wonder at the doctrine of a *Personal Advent of Christ before*, and *Reign of Christ during the Millennium*; and a third party scout the idea of "*New Heavens and a New Earth*," "yea they despise the pleasant land, they believe not his word."³

Concerning the first of these rejected doctrines,

¹ Eph. vi. 11, 12.

² Rom. xvi. 20.

³ Ps. cvi. 24. Is. lxx. 17.

I have already expressed my belief that it is *a truth revealed in the word of the Lord*, and therefore, unless that word fail, it must be fulfilled; and my sincere desire is, that not myself only, but all, who at this moment reject the doctrine, may be partakers of that resurrection. For "*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*"^{1*} Yet we are told this resurrection is not literal! This is the word of man, the other is the word of God. I must be excused for saying, that I reject the one but believe the other, for "God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent. Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?"²

I am aware that the learned Bishop Newton is lightly esteemed, because he believed that the Spirit of God intended *literally* what he has revealed on this subject in the word. Notwithstanding this, I shall take the liberty of offering his counsel to those that oppose themselves, hoping it may have weight with some.

¹ Rev. xx. 6.

² Numb. xxiii. 19.

* "On such the second death hath no power." What is the conclusion from these words? That "the second death" hath power on such as have no part in this First Resurrection. And what is this *second death*? A "part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, *this* is the second death." (Rev. xxi. 8.) Does not this teach us that *all the saints*, small and great, who have lived before Christ's second coming, shall be sharers of that First Resurrection? See note p. 32.

"This Prophecy, (Rev. xx. 1—6.) therefore, remains yet to be fulfilled, even though the resurrection be taken only for an allegory, *which yet the text cannot admit, without the greatest torture and violence.* For with what propriety can it be said, that some of the dead, "who were beheaded, lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished," unless "the dying" and "living again" be the same in both places, a proper death and resurrection? Indeed, the "death" and "resurrection" of the witnesses before mentioned, chap. xi., appears, from the concurrent circumstances of the vision, to be figurative, but the "death" and "resurrection" here mentioned, *must, for the very same reasons, be concluded to be real.* If the Martyrs* rise only in a spiritual sense, then "the rest of the dead" rise only in a spiritual sense; but if "the rest of the dead" really rise, the Martyrs rise in the same manner. There is no difference between them; *and we should be cautious and tender of making the first resurrection an allegory, lest others should reduce the second into an allegory too;* like those whom St. Paul mentions, 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18., "Hymeneus and Philetus, who, concerning the truth, have erred, saying, that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." It is to this first resurrection that St. Paul alludes, when he affirms, 1 Thess. iv. 16, That "the dead in

* Bishop Newton, as has been before noticed, was of opinion that "the Martyrs" only should partake of the First Resurrection. On this subject see Note, p. 32.

Christ shall rise first, &c.”¹ Such reasoning is clear and logical, well supported by Scripture, and, will furnish a safe and wholesome rule, to those who allegorize Scripture ad libitum.

Again, *The personal Advent of Christ at the Commencement of the Millennium* is denied. Without darkening the counsel of God by man's words, I look at once to the record; and there I find that that same Jesus, who, after his resurrection, was taken up from his disciples into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as his disciples saw him go into heaven. If, therefore, it was a spiritual ascension it will be a spiritual return, or coming again, for it is to be *that same Jesus* who is *to come in like manner as he went*. That it was a real, corporeal, visible ascension, I believe, all will acknowledge, therefore his coming again must be real, corporeal, and visible. It was “*a cloud* received him out of their sight;”² and when he cometh again, “they shall *see* the Son of man *in a cloud*, with power and great glory;”³ and, with Job, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.”⁴ To this faith, the Spirit of the Lord testifies in his word; to this faith, the blessed Angels, who were with the Church on the mount of Olives, testify; yet this faith I am expected to renounce, because men think that it is unfounded! But, some men will say, We do not deny that the

¹ Newton on the Prophecies, p. 668.

² Acts i. 9.

³ Luke xxi. 27.

⁴ Job xix. 26.

Lord shall come personally at the end of the world, and these words from the Acts of the Apostles apply to that coming, which will not take place at the time you suppose. But, if the Lord declares that he will so come *at that time*, which is the plain intent of many of the words of the Prophets, who are we that we should presume to doubt it? I believe verily to see the Lord in the land of the living, *only because the Lord has said it*; and, *for the same reason*, I believe, that, *at the time spoken of by the Prophets*, "he that shall come will come, and will not tarry;"¹ and I believe that time shall be, "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints,"² when "the kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom *under the whole heaven*, (and therefore *on the earth*), shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High,"³ when they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years," even *when they shall "reign on the earth."*⁴ That this is the truth of God I am fully persuaded in my own mind, and therefore I cannot reject it.

But this implies three personal Advents of Christ, says another objector, *and the Scriptures only speak of two*. Begging pardon for the abruptness of my reply, It does no such thing. For if the Lord Christ shall come at the commencement of the Millennium, as the Scriptures of the Prophets testify, and if, as they also testify, the object of that coming be to reign on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously

¹ Heb. x. 37.

³ Dan. vii. 27.

² 2 Thess. i. 10.

⁴ Rev. xx. 6, and v. 10.

(which as yet he has never done); and if, as the same Scriptures teach, he shall reign with his Saints on earth during the seventh Millenary, at the end of which time "the rest of the dead" shall rise: How are three personal Advents implied in this? *Whence* is Christ to come personally if, propriâ personâ, he be actually *here*? *Hither* he is to come at the commencement of his glorious reign. *Here*, he has said, that he will reign in his glorified humanity, (for his Godhead is every where at all times, He fills heaven and earth, and the special presence of the Spirit of Christ is with his Church on earth, by virtue of that promise, "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world,") and at the end of that reign, which shall be marked by his putting all enemies under his feet, *here* he will be found, ready for that work and final triumph over all enemies, of which the Scriptures¹ speak so decidedly, and of which Death is the last.

As to *The Personal Reign of Christ in this renewed earth*, which by many is thought deserving of wonder, I neither shrink from repeating that I believe it, nor from stating my reason for that belief. The Spirit of Christ has revealed it by the mouths of his holy Prophets, to whose writings on the subject, reference has before been made (p. 21); and, I believe, that it shall be even as God has shewed us in his word.

If the former doctrines are made subjects of ridicule, that of *New Heavens and a New Earth* fares no better; and many justify their rejection

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. Rev. xx. 10—15.

of this Scripture Truth, by saying, it would be very derogatory from Christ's honour, to suppose that he could so descend from his present exaltation, as to take up his abode in this earth under any circumstances. Now, herein is a marvellous thing, that man, who is a sinner, should be more jealous of the honour of the Lord's Christ than God himself! Surely the care of Christ's honour may be safely left in his hand who doeth all things well; and I am persuaded that we honour him far more by implicitly believing what he says, notwithstanding the difficulties which may appear to us to be consequent thereupon, than by questioning the truth of God, of which he ever has been infinitely jealous.¹

But these insane Millenarians assert, That there shall be men in the flesh in the new earth, and that there shall be sinners in that state; and, moreover, that there shall be the procreation of children, and building of houses, and planting, and labouring, and other things "fit only for the reveries of a lunatic!!" One trifling error is here committed, it is not the mad Millenarians who make these assertions, but, happily for them, the holy prophet Isaiah in the 65th chapter of his writings. The shortest way therefore of settling this question is by turning to the Bible, for from that authority there can be no appeal. Having done this, I find St. Peter, 2 Ep. iii. 13, using these notable words. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." St. Peter

¹ Psalm cxxxviii. 2.

has before spoken of the earth and surrounding heavens, or atmosphere, in two states, first, as the old, or antediluvian world, which he calls "the heavens of old, and the earth:" secondly, as "the heavens and earth which are now," or the present, post-diluvian world; and, thirdly, he speaks of the same in another state, as the "new heavens and a new earth." If we are to understand the third state here named, in a spiritual, figurative, or allegorical sense, *so must we understand the other two*. I need not point out the inconvenience of such an admission. Therefore I understand them all literally. But, by using the term "we," the Apostle evidently conveys this idea to the mind, That the thing, for which he looked, was an object of common expectation to himself and his associates, that is, to the Apostles and members of the Church of Christ. But this general expectation of the Church, he founds upon a promise, "we according to his promise," a promise "of God," as will be seen by a reference to the context, and therefore, "exceeding great and precious" and, like all others, "yea and Amen in Christ." Now where is this promise found? In the 65th Isaiah, and no where else. Let us turn to the passage, and examine the terms of the promise for the fulfilment of which, *after St. Peter had put off this tabernacle*, as our Lord had revealed to him,¹ *he*, in common with the Christian Church, *looked forward*. For that he, as well as St. Paul, understood that the day of the Lord was not then at hand, and that the man of sin had yet to be re-

vealed, is, I think, no mad conclusion.¹ Beginning, therefore, at the 17th verse of that chapter, and considering each verse to the 25th, we shall find the following particulars specified, and forming the component parts of the promise.

The creation of new heavens and a new earth, of such a sort that the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. An exhortation to be glad and rejoice for ever in that which God creates, a reason for this being added, that God creates Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. The next thing revealed is, that the Lord will rejoice in his work, even in Jerusalem, and joy in his people. The prophet is then instructed to communicate some particulars concerning the condition of this people of the Lord, in whom he will joy. That the voice of weeping shall not be heard nor the voice of crying in their city. That there shall be no more an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days, that if one *die* an hundred years old he will be but a child, (which I believe is held to be the meaning of the words in ver. 20.) but the *sinner* being an hundred years old shall be accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them: as the days of a tree are the days of this people, they shall not labour in vain, nor *bring forth* for trouble: before they call God will answer: the wolf and the lamb shall feed together; the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat.*

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16. 2 Thess. ii. 1—8.

* "Why doth God use a speech to the serpent that understandeth it not?"

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, *saith the Lord.*

Is this a promise? St. Peter tells us that it is. Has it yet been fulfilled? Never, I may safely say. Then it remains to be. The next enquiry is, When? Modern Millenarians believe, when "a king shall reign in righteousness:" when "with righteousness shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: when he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked," &c. when "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them."¹

Modern Millenarians know that Christ, as yet, has appeared in his prophetic and priestly offices only; in which last, as the great High Priest and forerunner of his people, he has entered within the veil, even "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," and is performing at the throne of grace the Intercessory part of that Priestly office.² They also know that in his Kingly office *he has yet to appear*, and that God

¹ Is. xi. 4—9. See also Jer. xxiii. 5—8.

² Heb. ix. 24. x. 19—21.

It is for man's sake and not for the beast's sake.

What manner of curse is this, when there is nothing laid upon the serpent, but that he was appointed at the beginning, before he became the devil's instrument to tempt Eve?

It is true, that he crept upon his belly before, and ate dust before, as appeareth in the prophet, Esa. lxx. 25. But his meaning is that he shall creep with more pain, and lurk in his hole for fear, and eat the dust with less delight and more necessity."—*Usher's Body of Divinity*, p. 123, Ed. 1702.

"When he cursed the serpent to go on his belly, he means all the devils," &c.—*Goodwin's Christ the Mediator*, Vol. III. p. 312, 313

the Father has yet to set his King on his holy hill of Zion; and finding, as they do, that the revelation of Christ in his Kingly office is connected in Scripture with certain circumstances, foretold concerning this earth, which as yet have never been accomplished, they believe that these predicted events shall happen at the same time, *because in Scripture they find them united*; and, mad as they may be in other respects, they are not mad enough to attempt to put asunder what God has joined together. Hence they believe there shall be new heavens and a new earth, a new Jerusalem, an elect people of God *in the flesh*, death after long life, and sin, building of houses, and planting of vineyards, and a rest to that creation which is now groaning and travailing in pain because of man's sin, and which is "made subject to vanity," for a season, in hope of deliverance from the present state of bondage. Still there are difficulties in the way of such things being *literally* accomplished. To you and me, reader, there must be, but Is anything too hard for God? So long therefore as this 65th chapter of Isaiah and the 3rd chapter of St. Peter's second Epistle form parts of the Canon of Scripture, so long, I must, of necessity, believe these things, because what God has promised he will assuredly perform.

I cannot close this chapter without protesting against the expedient, to which some have recourse, of drawing illogical conclusions from the opinions they oppose, in order to bring them into discredit. The following is an example of the practice which I condemn. "If their ideas (*i. e.* Millenarian) are founded in truth, it would

be our clear and unquestionable duty to set our affections on things on earth; and we could not begin too soon, nor prosecute too eagerly, the accumulation of terrestrial wealth."¹

"Modern Millenarians" know too well that the earth, *as at present constituted*, is no fit residence for the Lord and his saints, "because it is polluted." They know that "the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up."² What then is to become of this accumulated worldly wealth? They therefore endeavour themselves, by God's grace, and teach others also, to "fix their affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For they are dead, (to such things,) and their life is hid with Christ in God:" and they know that "when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory."³ They also know that, if Christ's glory is to be manifested in the "new earth" as the Scriptures teach them to expect, they shall behold it, and be sharers in the same, because "God hath called them, by the Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ,"⁴ and, where he is, there they shall be also.

CHAPTER VI.

The practical uses of a right faith in the foregoing Doctrines.

NOTWITHSTANDING what has been advanced in the preceding chapter, some may be still inclined

¹ Dr. Hamilton on Modern Millenarians, p. 171.

² 2 Pet. iii. 10.

³ Col. iii. 2-4.

⁴ 2 Thess. ii. 14.

to enquire, Of what practical advantage are these disputed doctrines? Much every way. If they form a part of God's revealed Truth, (which I believe they do,) the knowledge of them must be profitable, or that God, who does nothing in vain, would not have revealed them. But their direct tendency, where they are received in humility and faith, is highly *practical*, and has been found to produce the happiest influence on the principles and lives of many. Thus the direct tendency of faith in *the Second Advent of Christ, as before laid down*, is to make men *look for his appearing and kingdom*, which duty the Scriptures often enforce. St. Paul frequently refers to it, and represents that event as the "blessed hope" of the Gospel.¹ Hence *Watchfulness* is excited, hence *Prayer* is quickened, and thus, two most important *practical duties* are called into exercise, by receiving, in simplicity of faith, what the Scriptures teach concerning the Second Personal Advent of the Lord, at the commencement of the seventh Millenary.

Another *practical* effect, which has been found to result from these truths is, that they enable men to *sit loose to the world as at present constituted*, and enforce that important precept, so much and so awfully compromised by professing Christians at this hour, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." For, "seeing that all these things shall be dissolved," and that ere long God shall renew the face of the earth, when "the meek shall inherit" it, (which, as yet, they

¹ Tit. ii. 13.

never have done, for "now we call the proud happy,"¹) the natural effect produced upon them is, to say to their souls, "This is not your rest, because it is polluted,"² but "there remaineth a rest (even "a keeping of a sabbath," marg.) to the people of God."³ Seeing all these things, their natural effect is, to make them diligent that they "may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless."⁴ And how is this to be done? By making their calling and election sure. Thus much *Carefulness* is wrought in them *about spiritual things*, much earnest *Self-examination*, Whether they are in the faith, interested in Christ, and his righteousness, and standing under that better covenant of grace, which is "ordered in all things and sure." Thus they give diligence to occupy their talents, and to perform the duties of their stewardship, and in all things to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. These are *some* of the practical effects resulting from a lively faith in this doctrine, *That the day of the Lord is at hand*. Is it right that doctrines, which have been made instrumental in promoting such effects, should be condemned as unprofitable and vain?

But another, and most valuable accompaniment of these truths, is *their unpopularity*, that they are subjects of ridicule to many, and that those who maintain them are lightly esteemed, and almost every where spoken against.⁵ The *advantage* arising from this circumstance is, in my opinion, incalculable. It has ever formed a part of Satan's

¹ Mal. iii. 15.

² Mic. ii. 10.

³ Heb. iv. 9.

⁴ 2 Pet. iii. 14.

⁵ 1 Cor. i. 18-23.

policy in order to increase his spiritual dominion, as "the god of this world," to make the world an instrument of corrupting the Church. It may be traced in the history of the old world before the flood, in the history of the Jewish Church, and after that in the history of the Christian. The World and the Church were distinguished from each other from the first: the former are found in the line of Cain, the latter in that of Seth; and the great corruption of the earth before the flood is thus explained. (Gen. vi. 1, 2.) "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose." Here the barrier was broken down, the "sons of God" formed worldly alliances, no longer looking to continue a holy seed in the earth, they mixed with the world, and the corruption of all flesh, with the exception of one family, followed. Thus the seed of the serpent prevailed, and so awfully as to call down the destruction with which the Lord visited the world that then was. The same device of Satan, and a corresponding issue, may be traced in the Jewish History. The Jews were God's peculiar people. But did they always continue such? No. How did they fall from their high estate? "They were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works;" and, at our Lord's appearing, the great body of the nation had become so carnally minded, that the distinguishing faith of God's elect could scarce be found in Israel, and one part of his *blessed* character, which proved a stone of stum-

bling to the people, was his complete deadness to the world, as at present constituted, and to the fashion of this world which passeth away.

The early history of the Christian Church confirms the above remark. During the first ages, when, more or less, she suffered persecution, she walked humbly with her God. But experience proved that Persecution could not spoil her, for "the blood of the Martyrs was the seed of the Church," some being always ready to be "baptized for the dead." Hence, when peaceful times succeeded, and the religion, which for more than three centuries had been persecuted, became, under Constantine, the religion of the Empire, Satan had recourse to his old device, and the seed of corruption was sown in the Church. Her crosses were of gold, and her crown, no longer a crown of thorns, became one of earthly splendour; and those Christian graces, which in all their native brilliancy had shone forth in the dark night of affliction, "grew pale and disappeared," when the sun of worldly prosperity arose upon her.

And what spiritual person can consider the actual state of "the sons of God"¹ and the world, at this hour, without just cause of alarm? It is often said, and I believe sincerely, that The times are greatly improving, that there are no longer such open unblushing infidel publications as are too well remembered, that the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel are far more tolerated than they used to be, and that the world does not manifest such decided opposition, as it once did, to the saints.

¹ 1 John iii. 1.

By just so much the worse, I humbly think, as a secret foe is more dangerous than an open enemy. Who is the god of this world? The Bible tells us that Satan is. And has his cunning craftiness ceased? Does he no longer lie in wait to deceive? Is he not at this moment equally anxious to enlarge his dominion, and to do despite unto God, and to all in whom the renewed image of God is found, as he ever was? And, are we so utterly simple as to believe, that this forbearance of the world toward the people of God has no object? Are we so very easy as to suppose there is no end to be answered by this new and tolerant spirit so much extolled in the present day? What, has the offence of the cross ceased? Never, believe me; neither can it cease, till righteousness hath fellowship with unrighteousness, and light hath communion with darkness, and Christ hath concord with Belial. Are we then so grossly deceived as to suppose that the World intends to give up its principles? It has nothing to substitute in their place, the thing, therefore, is impossible. The World has no idea of such a sort as this. But how shall two walk together unless they are agreed? If, therefore, the Church will mingle with the World, one party must conform, the World cannot, and the Church it is which must stoop to worldly conformity, at the peril of her present comfort, and the risk of her everlasting glory. Now if the foregoing views fix a mark on those who conscientiously entertain them, if thereby their names be cast out as evil, and the World account them mad, and their end to be without honour, then has the offence of the cross revived in a part, at least, of

the professing Church of Christ. And that part must, of necessity, come out from the world, and be separate, and shew that they are not of the world, because the world hates them; and for such a necessity they have cause to bless God from henceforth even for ever.

Such are some of the *practical uses* which result from a right faith in Millenarian doctrines. Reader, what have you to urge against them? That all men are not consenting to their truth? Were all men ever agreed on any subject? Reader, "Believest thou the Prophets?" Then believe thou must, that "the Lord shall come with ten thousand of his saints;" that, "at his coming, the dead in Christ shall rise first, which is the first resurrection;" that the Lord will "create new heavens and a new earth;" that Christ, as "David's Son," shall be "brought unto the Ancient of days, and shall receive a Kingdom," even "the throne of his father David;" that "the Kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the Most High," who "shall live and reign on the earth with Christ, the King of Saints, a thousand years."

"Believest thou the Prophets? Then believe thou must, That "He which testifieth these things saith, surely I come quickly."

"AMEN, EVEN SO, COME LORD JESUS."

POSTSCRIPT.

IN 1 Cor. xv. 28, we meet with these remarkable words, "*When all things shall be subdued unto him, [the Son,] then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*" It has often struck me that this passage reveals some important change in the divine economy, respecting the redeemed Church, intended to succeed the second resurrection, and the casting Satan into the lake of fire and brimstone, to be tormented day and night for ever and ever. Rev. xx. This opinion has been confirmed by the following exposition of it, in the works of that eminent divine, William Strong, of whom it has been said, as it was of Augustin, "*That he was indeed a wonder of Nature for natural parts, and a miracle of Grace for deep insight into the more profound mysteries of the Gospel.*"

"Hereafter God shall be all in all, and God will work all things by himself immediately. Here he doth comfort us by the creatures, and rules us by angels, by magistrates, and ministers; but that shall not be in the life to come; for he will work all himself immediately."

"There is a time for the regress of Christ's kingdom into the hand of the Father, that he may immediately administer it again, as he did from the beginning, and that, I conceive, is meant by the subjection of the Son, 1 Cor. xv. 28. He is subject during all the time of his kingdom; for he

does rule but as the Father's servant, and, he says, as the Father *gave me commandment*, even so *I do*; but there is a greater subjection, that yet Christ must shew unto the Father.—He is now the Father's servant, and subject to him, but it is in a secret and unobserved way, the government is in his hand, though the Father rules in him; but then he shall lay down all at the Father's feet before men and angels, and become subject to the glory of the Father."—Strong on the Covenants, pp. 298 and 323.

From which I conclude, *That, whereas the Godhead now governs mediately, through the Son of man as Head over all things: Matt. xxviii. 18. Eph. i. 22. Heb. ii. 8. and by angels, and principalities, and powers that be, this mode of government shall cease, at the time spoken of by St. Paul, and the glorious Godhead in the unity of its Essence, shall govern all things immediately.*

It has been justly observed, by a pious writer of the present day, that "he grieves to behold, in many of those who avow their belief in the near and actual coming of the Saviour, a far greater disposition to let their thoughts run on to the events, that shall come after, rather than to dwell on his coming, and the great consequences which shall result to themselves from that." Parable of the Ten Virgins, p. 113, by the Rev. C. D. Maitland.—Though I perfectly agree in the truth of these remarks, believing that there is sufficient reason for the regret here expressed, yet it must be with this restriction, that we are not hindered by them from searching the Scriptures for that measure of information, concerning things to come, which it has pleased God to reveal. Hence I conceive it to be the duty of the Church to attend to such a passage as this, for doubtless, it would not have been revealed but for this purpose,

That we should give good heed to the doctrine it contains. If we consider the several dispensations which have been appointed since the fall of Adam, we shall discover so much imperfection in each, the fruit of sin, that it must be clear, none of these was designed to be final, and to endure for ever. The lapses of the saints in the Patriarchal, the corruption and falling away of the Jews in the Mosaical, and the like effects in the Christian, confirm this remark. Even man in Paradise, though created in the image of God, perfect in his kind and very good, manifested, the important truth, That an upright creature cannot stand in his uprightness, when left to himself: [being liable to change, for unchangeableness belongs to God only,] and that the grace of union of the Paradisiacal state was not of such a kind as to fit even that, though very highly exalted, for the last and eternal condition. [The same truth was also shewn, to a certain point, in the "angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation."] And that, which has been manifested from the fall of man to the present hour, remains to be shewn in the Millennial age, at the close of which we are to expect a great apostacy of the inhabitants of the earth. Rev. xx. 7—9. Thus we are taught that, as in each of these dispensations the only security of the creature was the being found in God, or being upheld by God, according to the measure of the grace of union of each; and, as in each this grace was liable to interruption; moreover, it appearing to be the divine purpose to bring the elect church into a condition of eternal unchangeable safety, in which no member can possibly fall, because none can offend: *some more perfect economy remained to be revealed, in which the elect body should be effectually and unceasingly influenced by the power and grace of the Godhead; and that I conceive to be here de-*

scribed by the Apostle, saying, "When all things shall be subdued unto the Son, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

This *immediate* government of God is not hard to be understood. For whereas the Essence of the Godhead is of necessity always and every where present, and literally fills heaven and earth, Jer. xxiii. 24, though that presence is now only *manifested* in sundry places and in divers manners, then it will be revealed to the glorified members of his body the Church, at all times and in all places, and thus *directly* and *immediately* influence the whole body, which is "the fulness of Him, that filleth all in all." I am aware that one objection amongst others, may be raised against this doctrine, founded upon the idea, which is entertained by many, That the glorified Church will never see the face of God, or the divine essence; in other words, That the beatific vision will consist of nothing more than the Godhead manifest in the glorified humanity of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Though I reverence many who hold this opinion, and freely acknowledge myself a very babe in Christ compared with them; yet, as it sometimes pleases the Father to reveal his truth to babes, I humbly suggest what the Scriptures, appear to me to warrant, on this subject.

The Bible sets forth two ways by which God is seen, it speaks of "the Face of God," which no mortal man can see and live, Exod. xxxiii. 20, and which is, I believe, rightly understood to be *his glorious Essence*.* It speaks also of his "back

* When we read of the Lord speaking to Moses face to face, it has been understood as a figure of speech, intended to convey this idea to our minds, that Moses was permitted to hold a more familiar communion with God than was given to other men. May we not rather understand, from these expressions,

parts," Exod. xxxiii. 23, which Jehovah manifested to his servant Moses, and which we learn, from the account of that gracious act of condescension, to have been nothing else than *his attributes*, [which are now revealed to the eyes of our understandings on earth in the face of Jesus Christ, Eph. i. 17,] even the name of God proclaimed in Three Persons, intimated, by "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious," which is ably and learnedly explained by Dr. Thomas Goodwin. [Vol. 4. of his Works.] Now, though *man in the body*, is incapable of looking upon the essence, or the face of God, yet our Lord teaches that the angels in heaven do *behold the face of the Father*, that is, they enjoy the beatific vision according to this statement. But the same divine teacher informs us that they, who shall be thought worthy to partake of the first resurrection, "shall be as the angels of God." *ὡς ἄγγελοι τῶν Θεῶν*, Matt. xxii. 30, *ισάγγελοι*, Luke xx. 36. If therefore the angels are admitted to this high privilege of beholding the face of the Father, we cannot be equal with them without being admitted to the same. It is, however, capable of proof, that in Christ redeemed sinners are above angels: for, though man, standing in the first Adam, was made a little lower than the angels in the order of creation, yet in the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, he has not only life, but glory, more abundantly. For whereas the elect angels are justified before God only in their own righteousness, which is that of a mere creature, the redeemed sinner

"As a man speaketh to his friend." Ex. xxxiii. 11. "Mouth to mouth." Numb. xii. 8., that, when the Lord Christ spake with Moses in the holy mount, he assumed a human form, or similitude, for the time, which removes the necessity for supposing any figure of speech. He would then literally speak *as a man to his friend*.

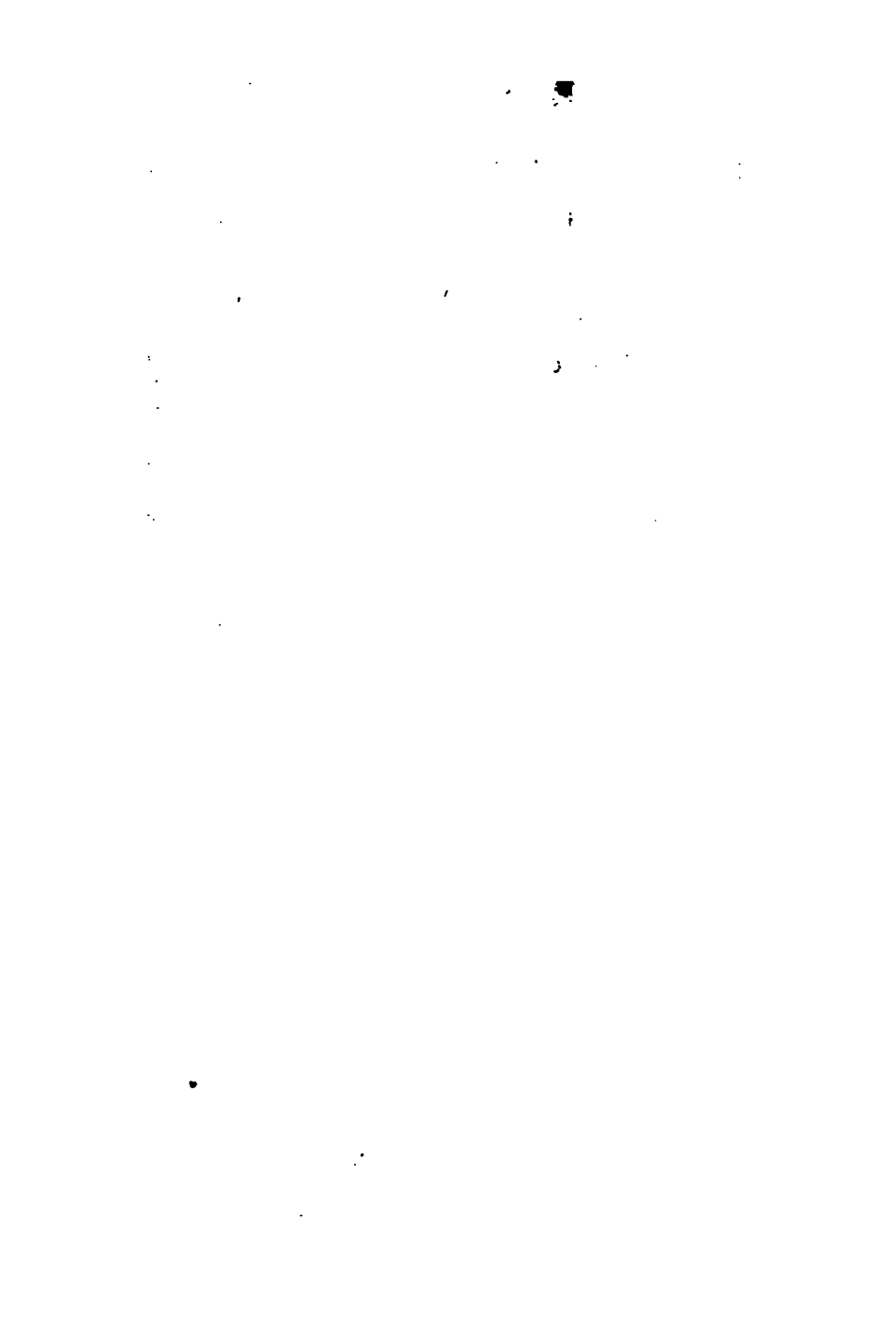
stands in the righteousness of him, who was God as well as man, and therefore in a higher and more perfect condition. Now, if the elect angels behold the face of the Father, how can we refuse that privilege to the redeemed church, who shall certainly be equal to, and, in all reason and probability, above angels, because they are one with Christ, and the glory which the Father gave him, he hath given them, John xvii. 21—24. Of course I do not intend to say that the *essential* righteousness of Christ, as God, is imputed to the sinner, because that is incommunicable. In confirmation of this argument, a question might be asked respecting that vision of God which the glorified *manhood* of our Lord enjoys. None, I suspect, will deny that the *manhood* of Jesus Christ sees the face of the Father, and if so, upon what ground do we deny that to the members which is given to the Head? “As he is, so are we in this world,” in order that, as he is, so we may be in the next.

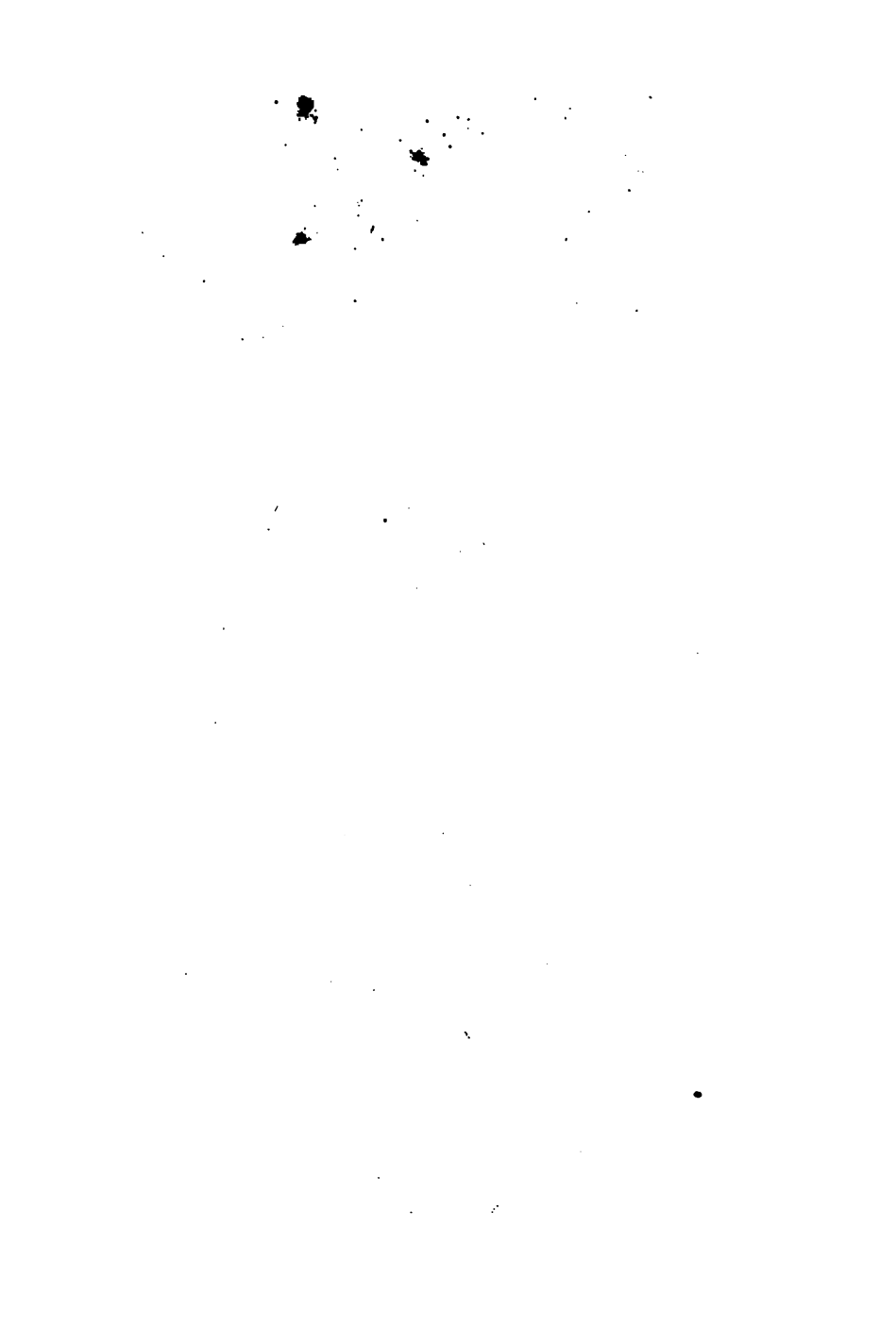
Under this view of the matter, I conceive, it will be impossible for the sons of God to move anywhere amidst his works, in all places of his dominion, without being *sensible* of his presence; neither will they need any other constraining influence. Thus the divine Essence, or a *manifested omnipresent* God, will direct, and govern all, and form the great source of delight in that eternity, towards which the course and current of this world is set. In that state the all-sufficiency of the Godhead for the creature, Gen. xvii. 1, will be known of all; and the enjoyment of that presence, in which now the blessed angels rejoice, will furnish the continual feast, of which it is said, “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

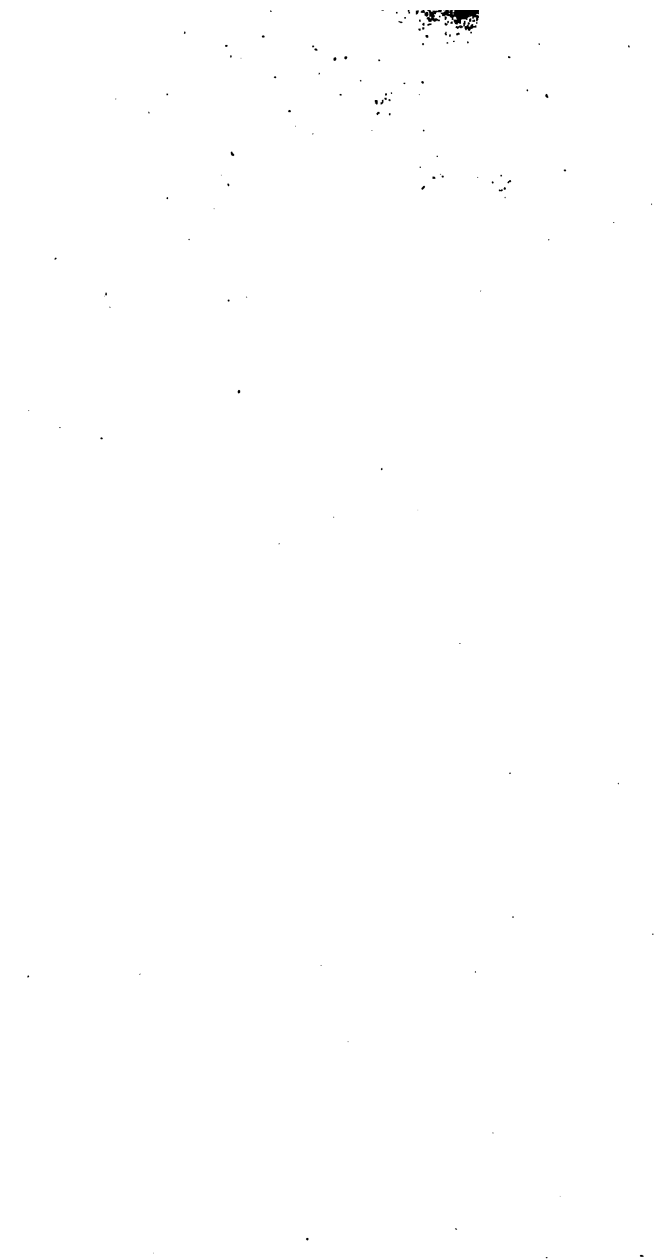
This immediate government of God will be

more ennobling to the elect church than any other, just as the immediate communication of an earthly potentate confers more honour upon a subject than a communication by another person; and though in the case of sinners, in a *fallen condition*, the Holy God could only communicate with them *mediately* through Christ, as the days-man between both, for to such out of Christ, our God is a consuming fire, yet when renewed unto holiness, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and clad with the garments of eternity, by this corruptible having put on incorruption, and this mortal having put on immortality, and this natural body having become a spiritual body, the case is changed, and redeemed man appears before God in his own image, whom he will no longer “see through a glass darkly, but face to face, and shall know even as also he is known.”

FINIS.









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